









MAURICE,  
THE ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY MRS. COLQUHOUN.

Dedicated, by Permission,  
to  
HIS MAJESTY, THE KING OF SAXONY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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## MAURICE,

THE

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#### CHAPTER I.

IN a room of ample dimensions in the Castle of Wittemberg, at that period the capital of Upper Saxony, (and of which Maurice had been put in possession upon the defeat and imprisonment of John Frederic the Steadfast,) stood the Elector. His face was flushed ; his countenance and

manner much disturbed ; he advanced tenderly towards a lovely young woman who was leaning with her hands folded over a small *escritoir* which was placed before her ; her face was buried in her handkerchief ; heavy sobs broke forth in spite of every effort to restrain them, and told of deep and uncontrollable sorrow.

“It grieves me sadly, my love, to bring you no happier tidings,” said Maurice sorrowfully, “but I cannot conceal from you the truth, nor were it well I should do so ; we enjoy little of each other’s society, and hard it is that that little should be thus embittered, but cheer up dear one, although put off—and for the present foiled, I do not yet despair that we shall obtain your honoured father’s release.”

“Think you so really, Maurice?” sighed the Electress, raising her still weeping eyes and fixing them anxiously upon her husband to watch the expression of his features ;

“but you would not say it to me if you did not think it.”

“Indeed my Agnes, I would not; but listen to me. These private despatches were delivered to me soon after I dismounted from my horse yesterday afternoon; my messenger reports that he was detained longer than I had calculated upon, but that he used all diligence to hasten back. You will see they contain no flat denial to the request I have so often publicly and privately urged, but are merely a repetition of the same vague expressions, conditions and evasions, to which we have been so long accustomed.”

“And what Maurice, mean you next to do, since neither friendship nor entreaty seems to work in my poor father’s favour?”

“We must,” replied Maurice, “by an open and formal embassy backed by those princes of the empire who are interested by friendship, alliance, or sense of justice in the cause, render it a matter of necessity

with the Emperor that he should give way to our renewed solicitations."

The Duchess shook her head mournfully.

"I know after what has passed," continued the Duke, "that you have no reliance on his promises, nor have I; but this must be publicly done, so that no after subterfuge can be resorted to without endangering the peace of the empire; here, look at these letters of interference to be sent from Denmark, from Ferdinand the Emperor's brother; Bavaria and Luneburg, also at the list of ambassadors promised from the Elector Palatine, Wolfgang de deux Ponts, John of Brandenburg, Henry and John of Mecklenburg, Ernest of Baden, and Christopher of Wirtemberg.

All these have made a compact with me to support, and many, if necessary, will take up arms to enforce the redeeming of that pledge which I so unwittingly relied upon :

Can you, my gentle wife, ever forgive me for my blind confidence?"

The Duchess placed her hand in his and looked fondly on him.

"It must be a greater fault than this unfortunate mistake, Maurice, which can ever cause my heart to rebel against you, cease to be your advocate, or teach my tongue to utter blame, my lips to speak reproaches; you trusted to the word of an anointed Prince, to the honour of a man, to the friendship of an Emperor for whom you had conquered; who had bestowed many and great benefits upon you, and professed to love you beyond all other men, you were deceived, but you did not betray, nor have you been found wanting to amend the evil."

"But men will not judge me thus," replied Maurice, "they know me not as you know me, they will canvass the result, not the intention; they cannot tell how much I have endured; they will not say 'Maurice did

this or that for the sake of the religion in which he was bred, or to save his country from despotism ;' they will not know that, surrounded by domestic spies, he was compelled to use craft against craft, policy against policy, and foil the traitors with their own weapons ; all and every one of his acts will be scored to the account of personal ambition ; they will not say 'had he not done thus and thus to gain pre-eminence and power, it would have been worse than useless to contend for these great objects ;' they will blame the man, attaint the prince, but accept and enjoy without gratitude the boons his valour and his policy have left for their inheritance. If heaven should decree," he added with much emotion, " that the tree fall ere the fruit be fully ripe, how will they know how my soul longed for peace ? how dear to me would have been the improvement and happiness of a people it has pleased Heaven to entrust to my hands

to govern ? How will they know the sacrifice made when torn from you to barbarous war ? But what matters," he said rising," the idle breath of man, which the wind as idle scattereth ; my true heart is known to you and to that Heaven above who planted it in my bosom, directs each throbbing pulse, and searches its most hidden secrets."

The Duchess looked through her tears with fond and proud satisfaction on her husband ; but there was a presentiment of evil to himself in his words and manner that turned the flood of her filial sorrow for the moment into another channel ; then both these anxieties were mingled in such mournful misgivings, that her heart sank with apprehension.

If Maurice's biographer speaks truly, he was a man far surpassing the age in which he lived, and could well command the tenderness of devoted woman. Ages have

passed, his prophesies have been fulfilled, while Catholic as well as Protestant Germany has ample cause to reverence his name.

Maurice having embraced his wife, quitted her to prepare his despatches, and make arrangements for the departure of those deputies on the following morning, who were to make this last effort to awaken in the Emperor's mind some compassion for his unfortunate and deceived captive, and to rouse him at last to a sense of the injustice he was committing against the honour of those princes, Maurice, and Albert of Brandenburg, upon whose word and faith the unfortunate Landgrave of Hesse had submitted to surrender himself and his territories at the feet of a Prince who was ruled by no law save the dictates of his own love of power and revenge.

The day passed over with little relaxation, and the night wore away, but still the Duke

did not seek his couch, where fatigue, more frequently than peace of mind, brought him the short repose which nature needed.

While the Elector's Chancellor Arnoldi was engaged with him in his private closet, Konrad had been for many hours occupied in copying the rough drafts of letters, memoranda, and instructions, for the guidance of Maurice's deputies, as well as for that of the other princes with whom they were to be in communication. His attention had scarcely been one moment diverted from his employment; his hand was cramped, and it was now with difficulty he could pursue his work. He was almost exhausted for want of food and overcome by drowsiness. He had completed what was prepared for him, and having arranged in order all the papers before him ready for the Duke's signature, while waiting till other drafts or notes should call him to a renewal of his labours, unconsciously fell into a

slumber. He was roused from his temporary forgetfulness by a rustling of the papers upon the table, and rose in time to see the slim figure of Bortoni gliding from the room. As the door was closing almost noiselessly upon him, Konrad rushed forward and seized him by the collar, thrust him aside, drew the bolt across the door, and again caught hold of the trembling valet. A hasty glance shewed him that the papers had been disturbed.

“ Demon’s imp,” he cried, “ is no place safe from thy prying eyes? What dost thou here at this late hour of the night.”

“ I came,” said the wily valet with diffidence, “ seeing you still up, to seek you, and humbly to request of you to do me a small matter of kindness with his Highness, I came to ask permission —— ”

“ To read his Highness’s despatches,” interrupted Konrad, “ you seem to have taken leave to grant yourself that favour.”

“Oh no! indeed no!” said the valet soothingly, “you do me wrong, good Master Konrad; the wind no doubt as I opened the door, blew some of your writings aside.”

“ You stealthy serpent; if you came for speech of me, how was it your were quitting the room without your errand?”

“ I was unwilling, Master Konrad to disturb you; as I found you sleeping and know how hard you are compelled to work day and night, I thought I would wait awhile until you awakened; I came to ask permission for a burgher friend of mine from Ghent, who is a stranger to your country, to take advantage of the escort about, as I hear, to leave Wittemberg to-morrow.”

“ No doubt you did,” replied Konrad, “ and intended that your burgher friend should be the bearer of the substance of you night’s gleanings from this table; who may this friend be? whence comes he? where would he go?”

“Be not so impatient, Master Konrad; all this I will propound to you anon good sir, if you should think well to do me this small service; he is a man of substance, and hath commissioned me to hand over to your keeping this purse of ducats in acknowledgment for the benefit you will confer upon him, for his business presses; and he would fain not lose so fair an opportunity as the one which is near at hand, and which will so materially expedite the matters which he has much at heart.”

Konrad took the purse, and laid it on the table, then exclaimed in wrath—

“Thou oily tongued knave, thou midnight thief and tempter, thou manufactured mass of lies, and manufacturer of treacherous falsehoods! but it behoves me that you do not make use of your stolen knowledge.”

Without further parley and with little ceremony he dragged the supple body of Bortoni towards a dark closet into

which he thrust him, and turning the key upon him, assured him that his friend should be sought for and despatched from the town without loss of time; a low chuckling laugh was all the valet's answer.

He now re-arranged his scattered papers, and found some of the rough drafts missing. Again he unlocked the door of his captive's temporary prison, and found him chewing the abstracted papers with indefatigable zeal. He drew him forth, and reaching a cord which had been thrown aside from a package, bound his arms behind him, searched his person, took from it and gathered up the remaining fragments which had escaped the jaws of the serpent, then examining the closet that there might be no loop hole for escape, again shut him in.

The creature knew resistance to be vain, for Konrad was powerful, and a word would summon the pages who were without, but who were slumbering too soundly to hear the steal-

thy step of the valet when he passed through the ante-chamber. Konrad was unwilling to disturb the Elector; he again seated himself, keeping his eye upon the door where he had laid his prisoner. He had now no inclination to sleep, indeed he feared the Elector's anger when he should deliver the captive in the morning, but one thought to avoid it by hiding the truth, never crossed his mind. He was not left long alone with his uneasiness, for Arnoldi entered with remaining work to be done, looked at Konrad, and was almost surprised to see him so alert.

“Have you substituted your purse for an hour-glass, master Konrad; one would think you had been counting the hours by your money?”

“No sir,” replied Konrad, “that is a bribe which I have just received.”

The Chancellor looked at him in some amazement.

"At any rate you are honest to confess it."

"I hope more honest, Sir, than those who offered it."

He now drew the Chancellor to the further end of the room, and related the attempt of Bortoni to possess himself of the papers, and added:

"I know I shall incur, and perhaps deserve the Duke's reprimand, but in truth when my task for the time was completed from which I have not stirred since noon of yesterday, I felt faint and weary, and nature proved herself the stronger power."

"Since noon, say ye?"

"Indeed, replied Konrad, "it is so."

"It is now long passed midnight," observed the Chancellor, "with what remains to be done, two hours I fear will scarcely release you from your duty."

"I can do it well," answered he, "but what orders for my prisoner? I must watch

him until I deliver him into other custody. I would not come to interrupt or give his Highness notice of my capture, for I trust he will seek some repose, and this thing of bribery and corruption has gleaned nothing but hard paper for his supper, and will find it troublesome to make much change of position."

Konrad now begged Arnoldi to satisfy himself that the valet was actually in durance. This he did ; Bortoni had contrived, by rolling round to the side of the wall, to sit upright ; Konrad replaced him again upon his back and assured him such efforts were useless, as he should look in upon him occasionally and restore him to his recumbent posture, which he was sure must be a relief to him and stretch his limbs, which were seldom indulged in the wholesome relaxation of longitude.

Arnoldi left the room, and soon after returned followed by a page bearing some

refreshment of which the Duke had partaken, and whom he had persuaded to retire. The faithful guards kept watch till the morning, when Arnoldi was called to attend the Duke, taking with him the packets which were to be delivered to the charge of the deputies.

The moans and low piteous entreaties of Bortoni had been for some time an annoyance to Konrad, and although the Duke's possible displeasure harassed his mind, he rejoiced when Arnoldi threw open the door, and announced his Highness.

"And so young man," said Maurice, "you have been caught napping while employed upon affairs of state, and moreover have accepted a bribe to betray your master; nay, attempt not to deny it, here is the evidence against you," pointing to the purse, which had lain untouched upon the table since Konrad had placed it there.

The colour mounted to the youth's face.

“Surely the Chancellor had not misrepresented him? what could the Elector mean?” he felt choking and could not reply.

The Elector waited for an answer, but Konrad quite overcome could not find words to make one.

“What no answer, sir, am I to imply guilt?”

The last word unloosed Konrad’s tongue, “If guilty, your Highness, I should be a shameless traitor.” He turned pale and shuddered. “I slept, it is true, but there lies the bribe untouched by me.”

Maurice seeing Konrad’s consternation, smiled.

“Poor youth, I believe I sometimes press hard upon your labour, but,” he added with a sigh, “there are few whom I can trust.”

Konrad bent his knee, and respectfully kissed the hand which motioned to him to rise.

“Come, sleeper, bring forth your prisoner.”

Konrad drew out the despicable Bortoni who lay grovelling at the Elector's feet.

Maurice looked down upon him with a scorn which would have withered an honester man.

“ Unloose him, Konrad, and let him stand upright, if such an effort be possible for him. Now, sir, tell your tale, and account for your intrusion at such an hour into mine, the Elector's private apartments.”

Bortoni gave the same story he had told to Konrad ; but with this addition, that he had been invited by him to visit him, and that he had taken the papers with his permission ; that hearing footsteps he had concealed him in the closet, and had bound him only as a feint to deceive the Chancellor ; that in case of discovery, he had also suggested to him the method of disposing of the documents he had obtained.

Konrad, during the valet's utterance of

this tissue of falsehoods, could hardly restrain his wrath.

“ Fiend and liar !” he cried ; “ but for his Highness’s presence, I would crush thee under foot, like a cankering worm as thou art !”

“ Remove his cap,” said the Elector.

The creature struggled ; but the cap was removed, and discovered that one eye was closed and sightless.

“ I know thee now,” said Maurice ; “ thou art Schwendi’s valet, the one-eyed spy. Heed him not, Konrad ; he is beneath the wrath of the poorest malefactor. Fetch more cords, bind him fast, and replace the caitiff whence you took him : we will deal with him when we have leisure.”

The Elector saw his orders obeyed, and left Konrad still on guard, while he gave audience of leave to the mission.

Maurice had commanded Schwendi’s pre-

sence, and had detained him for some time after the departure of the deputies.

The people crowded to see the cavalcade as it passed through the town. Hartorff, hearing no tidings of his new-found friend, became alarmed ; for perhaps it is needless to say he was to enact the part of burgher, and to take charge of the papers which Bortoni had engaged to procure, but stipulated for a round sum to be paid down before he would consent to be concerned in the transaction. As the valet was not true to his appointment, he feared that the scheme had miscarried, and kept close in his lodgings. Bortoni might give him up ; but as the weary lieutenant, in spite of all his prying, had not intrusted him with the knowledge of his abode, after two hours' waiting, he quitted the tavern where they were to meet, and stole away in trepidation through the bye-streets till he found himself at home ;

nor did he venture forth the next day till night-fall.

The valet knew well the room which Konrad occupied when transcribing; he also knew that the deputies were to depart before noon; and for hours had watched in the court below the light which was still burning. He passed the sleeping pages, and trusted to Konrad's being off his guard slumbering—as in fact he was, from over-fatigue—or his own invention, to frame some excuse if he could not bribe him, for his untimely intrusion.

Hendrick was soon sent to join Konrad; he had received his orders. They gave the one-eyed spy some food; and when night had sent all the inhabitants of the Castle to their rest, Hendrick drew forth the prisoner, gagged him, and throwing a cloak over him, with Konrad's assistance bore him off and lodged him in one of the dungeons beneath a tower of the Castle.

Schwendi, when he missed his valet, attended the Elector's summons with feelings far from enviable. He had been sent to watch Maurice; but the duty further imposed upon him by the Emperor, and the base means by which he was to gain information of the Elector's intended movements, as a soldier, often revolted against his better nature.

Bortoni had been sent to him, and was in fact a spy for and upon his master, for Charles had reduced the employment of spies to a system.

Reports were spread in the course of the day that a person answering the description of the valet had been drowned, and had been seen floating down the river. Schwendi devoutly hoped that Bortoni might be the man; but though the report was prevalent, he could gain no certain confirmation of it. As Maurice's behaviour to him was as usual, he trusted his part in the transaction if known at all, had not come to the Elector's,

knowledge; but if the body was really that of his valet, he must have met his fate at an earlier hour than the one at which he was to seek Konrad. He was not sorry to be rid of him.

Hartorff lamented the fate of the one-eyed spy, for he was a golden harvest to him. He had no intention of performing more of his portion of the agreement than would suit his convenience and interest: he would have been too happy to undertake the despicable part of Bortoni's office as a spy, though he disdained the honester part of his calling as valet, but he feared Hendrick and Konrad.

## CHAPTER II.

MAURICE, with his usual penetration, soon found that all was not well with his young guest; although he was a general favorite, bright eyes and encouraging smiles were lavished upon him in vain. He would often steal from the court circle, or find some excuse not to join it. When she could divest herself of her own melancholy, the Electress would banter him, call him her rueful young knight, wonder whether sighing was a part of his military duty; if so,

she would use her influence with the Elector to relieve him from a practice which she feared from its continual recurrence, would endanger his health.

Henry blushed and laughed, but sighed none the less.

The Elector, who was desirous that the inhabitants of Wittemberg should profit by his sojourn among them, promoted all the festivities of the season. He appeared to be devoted to the prosecution of every diversion, as if he had neither thought nor care beyond the amusement of the hour, and frequently called upon Henry to assist in the planning and execution of some new project for entertainment : Schwendi looked on and wondered, thought his office now a very useless one, but found it far more agreeable ; indeed, since he had lost his valet—who seemed to have the gift of ubiquity, and whom nothing appeared to escape, from the operations going on in the

kitchens to the secrets of the cabinet—he was much at a loss to unravel the meaning of many things which passed around him, more particularly the Elector's carelessness of manner. Couriers were coming and going, but their arrival or departure seemed no more matter of concern or notice to Maurice than the entrance or exit of the country people who frequented the markets : except an hour or two devoted to public business and which was known to all, he never missed him from any pastime which might be arranged for the day or evening ; he talked with him, and with his ministers openly on state affairs, appeared to have no secrets or settled plans, and conversed freely of what he should do as the spring advanced.

Schwendi began to think the young warrior and able politician, now that his views of ambition were gratified, would sink into the man of dissipation and the voluptuary.

Henry of Mansfeldt also thought, that his military talents were not likely to be fostered under such auspices ; and although he daily became more devoted to the Elector, the Electress, and their interests, suspected that his uncle had made a great mistake in separating him from himself and Count Heideck, if his object for him was improvement in state policy, or military tactics ; for no sign of either had he hitherto observed at the court of Wittemberg ; one pleasure followed another too quickly to admit of study of any kind ; at times, when unobserved by Schwendi, he had seen a cloud on Maurice's brow, but in a moment it was repressed, and vanished ; and Henry, whose feelings could always be traced upon his countenance, who acted and spoke as the circumstances of the moment prompted, never conceived that the muscles of the tongue or face could be brought under such command. He became vexed

and irritated at what appeared to him his unnecessary separation from Mathilda, and would often stroll forth, that his annoyance might not be observed.

According to the accustomed usage of lovers, he had obtained on parting from Mathilda a lock of her bright hair; this by the same rule was worn where lovers alway place such tokens of affection,—next his heart; in the haste of his sudden departure, he had had no time to procure a proper receptacle for this precious gift, but had worn it in the fold of silk in which he had received it. He now made it the occupation of a morning to seek a golden case, in which to deposit this valued souvenir. He was not easy to please, and had searched the repositories of two of the three goldsmiths' shops the town could then boast of, without satisfying his fastidious taste. As to form, he had decided upon something most in likeness to a locket, but of the few

which were presented to him for choice, one was too small, another too large, this too plain, that too fragile; he was almost despairing of success, when he sought the remaining shop wherein such specimens of handicraft were likely to be obtained, determined not to spare the owner's time, but to ransack every hoard in his possession. The master goldsmith, who knew him as the aide-de-camp of the Elector, was profuse in his civilities, and unsparing in his pains to suit the taste of his customer. Henry felt some compunction at the trouble he was giving, when case after case was produced, and he was still as far from pleasing himself as ever. If the man had been at leisure, perhaps these scruples for filling up his time so uselessly might not have occurred to him; but he was evidently engaged when he first entered, with a customer for whom he was changing some coin. The person so neglected, in answer

to Henry's apologies, said he could well wait, his business did not press. Again, for the twentieth time, Henry described the article he wished, something would suit him of rather a curious, but solid manufacture; which in case of accident he could know and claim again; something that would neither dent, bend, nor break.

The man feared that such as he described, was not in his possession; if he could furnish him with a pattern, or even a drawing, he did not doubt he had skill enough to produce the thing that would please him. The stranger now advanced with a respectful bow, and producing a locket from some invisible part of his doublet, presented it to the goldsmith, saying, from Mein Herr's description, he thought that was the sort of locket he wanted.

Henry with avidity seized the bauble, and while examining it with infinite delight, exclaimed with his usual energy; "Aye!

good sir, it is indeed, exactly, precisely.” The goldsmith smiled contemptuously upon the trinket which had been so derogatively presented for his imitation ; declaring that if that was all, his apprentice could fashion one as good, a thing so out of date.

Henry looked up with gratitude to the customer who had come forward so opportunely to relieve him from his difficulty. He was a respectable looking burgher, staid and demure in manner ; Henry was profuse in his thanks ; the burgher bowed, he was happy that he chanced to have the trifle about him. Henry’s eyes coveted the prize, especially as he was rather piqued at the goldsmith’s contempt for his taste, and the little inclination he now appeared to have to perform his promise of accepting the pattern offered. “Perhaps,” he observed to the possessor, “you value this locket?” for Henry’s notions of love and lockets ran together like well trained horses.

"Not particularly," was the answer, "I took it in exchange, as a balance for some small matters in the way of trade."

"If you do not greatly prize it," said Henry, "perhaps you will not object to part with it?"

"No, he should be too happy to oblige."

A price was named; and, wonderful to say, (considering that Hartorff was the dealer), at not more than thrice its value. Henry of course thought it a bargain, and departed, better pleased than he had been for some days. The burgher got his change, and went his way also, taking the precaution to tell the goldsmith that he was shortly about to quit the city, and delighted at the opportunity which had occurred for him to brew some mischief.

Henry on his return heard that he had been enquired for by the Elector, and hastened to present himself: he found him mounted,

and about to leave the castle, while his own groom was waiting with his horse.

“ Why my young friend,” said Maurice as they rode slowly forward, “ I thought you had ridden back post to Magdeburg ; and I was debating upon the expediency of sending couriers in search of you. I hope you will be a better aide-de-camp in the field, than you are in the court.” Henry stammered some excuse of purchases to make, was sorry his Highness had required him during his absence, but had been detained longer than he expected.

The Elector was more thoughtful than usual during the ride ; Colonel Schwendi was indisposed, and was not this day one of the many who generally attended the Elector in his excursions ; neither was Henry inclined to be loquacious ; Mathilda, hair, and locket, were chiming in his mind like marriage bells : his thoughts were of an agreeable character, the Duke’s were evidently the reverse ; he

concluded, indeed he knew, that the Duchess was unhappy about her father, and he imagined, that her sufferings caused her husband's unusual melancholy, as he should feel if Mathilda had anything to grieve her, and as he had often felt when she was vexed. He did not judge altogether unwisely, for doubtless this was in part the cause of Maurice's uneasiness, but a part only.

Before they dismounted, he told Henry that he should order a hunting party to assemble at an early hour on the morrow, at which he should require his attendance.

The following morning presented a scene of busy bustle; huntsmen mounted and dismounted, foresters armed with spears and javelins, footmen with staves, grooms and lacqueys, had been for above an hour collecting in the court yard, and formed a motley group; the bugle sounded the signal for departure. As the echo of the third and

last blast died away, the space of a minute being allowed to elapse between each flourish, every man, as if by some magic process, was in his allotted place, and the party proceeded in good order.

After they had quitted the town, they pushed on more briskly scattering themselves, and were seen scampering over the country towards the scene of their intended sport. Footmen, at an early hour, had been sent forward in waggons to pitch a tent for the Elector, and booths for the people, some of whom were to surround the wood, and others to beat up the game.

It was a holiday for all attached to the Elector's household whose inclination might lead them to join in the recreation. Every man that could be spared, was privileged to leave his occupation for that day; Konrad, among others, exchanged for a few hours the pen for his stout ashen staff; there was joking among the mirthful, and

jeering among the envious courtiers, at the secretary's rustic preference; the day was calm, the sky cloudless, but what little wind there was stirring, came keenly from the north, and saluted the face with that tingling sensation which brings the warm blood into the cheek. No snow as yet had fallen; the sapless and withered leaves lay undisturbed under their parent trees to form fresh nutriment for their successors of the future spring; the air was so rarified that every sound, though distant, fell distinct and clear upon the ear, and as the cavalcade passed onward to the before-mentioned theatre of action, the number of horsemen might have been estimated by the clattering of their hoofs upon the hard road. Maurice rode gaily forward pressing as eagerly as any of his young courtiers to the assigned locality.

The sport commenced and continued for some hours with unabated zeal; Konrad,

with his primitive weapon, and by his dexterity and success, had distinguished himself beyond the rest. As he dragged each slaughtered victim into the circle of the glade which had been cleared of brushwood for that purpose, and added it to the pile, shouts applauded his prowess. When weariness and hunger began to relax the first fervour which had animated the sportsmen, casting aside their javelins, staves, and spears, they gathered round the provision waggons, which were drawn up at the edge of the circle.

Henry was standing on the opposite side balancing his javelin ; Konrad a few paces distant from him, when a wolf, which had crouched among the thicker brushwood, on the cessation of the shouting, stealthily left his lair, and rushed towards the spot occupied by Henry, who without reflection, cast his light weapon at the brute, and wounded him in the side. The tortured beast turned

on his foe, who by his rashness had thus deprived himself of any defence, and making a fierce spring upon him with all his force and weight, threw him backwards upon the ground, fixed his fangs on his bosom with ferocious fury, while he kept him down with his fore feet, tearing away his clothes. Henry struck out his arms, endeavouring to ward off his deadly clutch, or grasp his throat; but the animal had so completely thrown himself upon him, and the attack had been so instantaneous, that there was no possibility of his making any effectual effort in his own defence. Although not two hundred yards intervened between the by-standers and this deadly struggle, their utmost speed could not have carried them in time to the rescue. Konrad, who happily was leaning against a tree close by, and who as the javelin whirled past him, fore-saw the result of Henry's want of caution, darted forward, swung his staff with velocity

round his head, and with a blow of tremendous force, dashed it into the skull of the ravenous brute. He then relieved Henry from the weight of the carcase, and assisted him to rise; the vest and pourpoint were torn from his breast, but fortunately the creature was destroyed before he could make a second gripe; Henry therefore escaped with a slight skin deep wound. In dismay the hunters crowded round; Maurice who but a moment before had retired to take some refreshment, hearing in the first instance the cries of alarm, and afterwards the shouts which followed the destruction of the wolf, dashed down the drinking horn which was at his lips, and hurried to the spot. Henry's tattered appearance, with the blood which flowed over him from the wound he had inflicted on the creature, filled him with apprehension for the safety of his protégé.

“He is safe, your Highness, he is safe!”

exclaimed many voices at the same moment, while they led Henry forth.

Maurice directed him to be taken into the tent, and followed to learn the particulars of his disaster.

Konrad remained on the spot, unwilling by joining the others to give the impression, that he wished to court notice, or that he laid claim to praise for his courageous conduct; he looked down upon the brute, while his heart swelled with thankfulness for the power which had been granted him to save the life of a fellow man; a power of which he hardly knew himself to be possessed, for his enemy was formidable, and had his arm not answered his aim, the consequences might have been equally fatal to Henry and himself.

As he stood contemplating the still quivering limbs and relaxing jaws of his prostrate victim, he drew aside with the end of his staff, the fragments of Henry's garments,

part of which were still adhering to the animal's fangs, and part trailing by a slight ligament along the ground: this upon drawing it towards him, he found to be a small chain of gold, to which was attached some heavier substance. He drew it over the grass previously to handling it, to cleanse it from the blood and brains which had spurted over it, and then picked it up with the intent of restoring it to the owner. The bauble which hung from the chain seemed familiar to him; it was the fac-simile of his parting gift to Thumelda. In trepidation he sought for the spring, it flew open, and within, too surely there was the rudely engraved K. which he had scratched himself. It was too well remembered: with trembling hands he reclosed the trinket; sickness was at his heart, and his good staff was now as much needed to support him, as it had been necessary two minutes before (as an offensive weapon in his then strong, but

now nerveless grasp) for the preservation of fellow creature. No exclamation escaped him, passion did not move him; he stood mute and bewildered, half stunned; his impulse was to fly into the forest, and hide from others the distraction of his mind which he feared he might betray; but his limbs refused to bear him thither, and crossing his hands against a tree, he bent his head upon them, until the dizziness which rendered every object around him dim, should pass away. Sounds met his ear, but they were to him indistinct and conveyed no sense, till a heavy arm upon his shoulder aroused him. With a vacant stare he turned and looked at the intruder; the spots of blood with which he was besprinkled, were a fearful contrast to the ashy paleness of his face.

“The Elector,” said the head forester respectfully, “requests your presence in the tent.”

Konrad heard the message with a half comprehension ; but made neither an attempt to move nor to give any reply.

“ You are wounded, surely,” said the man.

Still Konrad did not answer ; he shook his head, and motioned to move forward ; to complete the effort, was beyond his power, but it had been of service. He paused, then seizing the arm of his conductor, he crossed the enclosure, and presented himself before the Elector, and those assembled round him.

“ Konrad,” said Maurice when he appeared, “ you have done a brave deed, but not more than I should have expected from you. I will not degrade the generous action by offering you praise ; but any man who risks his life for another deserves distinction, that the example may be held in remembrance for imitation, henceforth therefore you are Wolffenstaff, and the badge of wolf

and staff shall be borne upon your sleeve  
and in your cap ; upon the sleeve of that  
arm which under Heaven's guidance, was  
stretched forth in power to save a valued life."

Konrad bent his knee ;—Maurice waved  
his hand over him.

"Witness all present, that Konrad Schröder rises Konrad Wolfenstaff," and turning to Arnoldi, "so write him down in our archives, good Chancellor."

Konrad kissed the hand which was graciously extended to him, and modestly drew back.

Henry followed and detained him, to pour forth his thanks. Konrad looked wildly at him, and dropped the fatal chain and locket at his feet ; he could not give it.

He was turning to go, but the other seized his hand ; "double and treble thanks for this my friend," he said picking up the recovered treasure. Konrad did not trust himself to speak, indeed his confused mind

could not fashion words. The forester, who was convinced he must be ill or wounded, led him into the air, then seating him in an empty booth, went in quest of wine ; Konrad was sorely stricken, the mental shock he had received had prostrated his bodily powers : the balance was overturned, and until the circulation was restored into its proper channels, he could not class his thoughts ; in fact he did not think ; he could not separate his vague ideas, or fix them on any given point ; they were like floating atoms whirled in an eddy too strong for his faculties to stem, feebleness and instinct led him to seek repose of mind in solitude ; a temperate draught from the cup which the forester presented to him produced some warmth, and the first rational and connected words he was able to utter, were thanks and a request that he would leave him for a time.

Half an hour elasped before the horsemen

were all assembled. By this time he had regained his self command ; he could now think, but would not trust himself to do so, for he dared not. The good-natured forester brought him his horse ; and as there was no order observed as to the manner of returning, he mixed among the common huntsmen, whom he knew would not volunteer to address him, and were too loquacious upon the sports of the day to observe him.

The Elector had declared it his intention to finish the day with an evening banquet in the hall. The moment Konrad dismounted he sought his chamber, he felt an intolerable weight and throbbing of the temples ; the wine and exercise had produced a sudden revulsion ; he plunged his head into cold water, changed his stained garments, and threw himself on the bed until he should be summoned by sound of trumpet to the revel, which he knew would be, and was kept up till a late hour ; he took his place, ab-

stained from wine, and had little desire to partake of the substantial viands before him. Cups were pledged to Henry and himself by Maurice's command, who turned to the young Count, and in a careless tone observed—

“ As news, Mansfeldt, hath fleet wings and many tongues, your jeopardy may reach your friends at Magdeburg, and, disguised by exaggeration, cause them some disquiet, therefore it will be as well for you to appear in person, and forestal report; for this reason I wish you to take horse for that place to-morrow; at the same time bear this ring,” drawing one from his finger, “ to your uncle, in token of my sense of his kindness towards those who by the chance of war were delivered into his hands. Though not costly, it will equally serve as a remembrance to express my acknowledgments to him, till I redeem it with one of greater value.”

This speech was another trial to Konrad which nearly overset his assumed composure; while to Henry the command was so exhilarating, that he could hardly repress his feelings, or thank the Duke in appropriate terms for his consideration. He rejoiced in the peril he had so recently escaped, since it was the cause of such happy consequences.

His open brow, and the friendly manner in which he expressed his gratitude to his deliverer, had determined Konrad to seek him on the morrow, and frankly to demand how he had obtained possession of the antique trinket. This step would now be difficult if not impossible, as he would most likely depart at sunrise. His only chance was to draw him aside after Maurice should have left his guests; but here again, fate interposed to cut the thread of his intentions.

When Maurice arose he sent a page to the lower table, to desire that Konrad

would follow him in five minutes to his private closet.

Henry was engaged in conversation when Konrad received this mandate, which thwarted the resolution he had so recently formed. He felt totally incapable of any labour, should the Elector require it of him ; he could not presume to account for his incapacity by a declaration of the truth, but left the hall with a heaviness of heart he had never known before.

In this state of depression he entered the Duke's cabinet, and slowly advancing towards the table at which he was seated, waited to receive his orders. Maurice raised his eyes to the youth's face with a searching glance. There was a slight shade of anger and contempt in that look which cut him to the heart. The cause of such an expression he could not divine, knowing himself blameless ; but it was another item to be added to

the catalogue of miseries he had endured that day."

" I fear, Wolffenstaff," said the Duke gravely, " that you deem your service rendered to Count Henry of Mansfeldt but inadequately rewarded. Had I supposed you sordid, I should have given you golden probation, and will do so still, however unwilling I may be to degrade your gallant action. Your sudden exit from the tent where I had commanded your presence, your refusal (as I am told) to pledge as others did at supper, have led me to this mortifying conclusion."

The Elector's words were worse than daggers to Konrad ; for a moment he was too much astonished to reply : and his countenance became scarlet with honest shame.

" Oh, Heaven ! my Prince !" at last he exclaimed, " is it possible you have judged thus meanly of me ? Is it possible that an accidental indisposition can thus have

drawn your displeasure on me? What merit could I claim? what reward did I deserve, for an act, the instinct of nature, which it would have been unmanly and inhuman to have resisted? Your Highness's words of approbation were far more precious to me than the unearned distinction which so graciously followed them. Revoke it I beseech you, if your Highness denounces me as the sordid caitiff your words imply. Wretched! disgraced! dishonoured Konrad! you are indeed degraded, unworthy to serve your Prince, or to be named among your fellow-men!"

Maurice felt that he had done Konrad injustice: his manly, unequivocating, and direct denial of the charge—his distress at the unfounded suspicion—his varying colour, and broken-hearted appearance—disabused his hasty but noble-minded Prince, who reproached himself for his inconsiderate judgment—for he had never found the

youth covetous : he neither flattered, fawned, nor took advantage of the confidential position in which he was placed ; but was punctual in the discharge of every duty which he was called upon to perform. That he thus had pre-judged him, gave him annoyance : he would not hesitate to acknowledge his impression to have been erroneous, or delay to soothe the feelings he had so deeply wounded. He thought too well of the youth to believe that he would take advantage of the reparation which was due to him for the undeserved accusation which he had implied against him ; but with much feeling, generously said—

“ Konrad Wolfenstaff, it pains me that I have done you wrong ; that I have done so I do not doubt. Take not to heart therefore, words which were spoken under a false impression ; your conduct to-day has been a riddle to me, which unfortunately I have not read aright. Think no more of

this ; and be assured, that if I had not taken a deep interest in the integrity of your character, I should not have watched your conduct with so jealous an eye."

" Then truly, my Prince, may I believe that you rescind such degrading thoughts of me?"

" I do, Konrad, and regret that appearances ever induced me to entertain them. You should have mentioned your indisposition, for truly wassail bowl is no fit medicine for an ailing man, and you did well to pass it by. Now seek your couch."

Konrad looked on his Prince with an expression of respect and devoted attachment, bowed lowly, and withdrew.

There was now no hope of gaining speech with Henry, as the revellers had dispersed. Worn and weary, he sought his chamber, fatigue alone procured him rest.

Maurice mused for a few moments after his departure.

“ Yes,” he thought, “ he is honest: had he loved money, he must have bade adieu to his Prince and Wittemberg. How much more of Spanish gold, Charles, dost thou lavish to corrupt honest men, than to reward them !”

### CHAPTER III.

HENRY spared not his steed, in order to abridge the hours which his journey would otherwise have consumed, and to hasten into the presence of Mathilda. He forgot that the same inducements were wanting to spur on those who were with him.

Before he reached his destination, both the men and their horses were knocked up by the fatigue to which his dispatch had exposed them.

The troopers devoutly hoped that his next hunt might be less disastrous, or that they would not be selected to bear him company in announcing to his family his safety. His liberal gratuity in some measure reconciled them to Henry, but did not quite compensate them for the exhausted condition to which his immoderate haste had reduced them.

His unexpected appearance was most welcome to those whom he came to seek ; and Mathilda, who had found the Castle lonely, and the hours lag heavily during her cousin's absence, hailed him with such smiles of welcome, that it seemed to him for such a reward, rest, food, or convenience, might well be dispensed with. He soon accounted to them for his unlooked for return, related his escape, eulogized Konrad's courage in defending and rescuing him, and finally delivered the ring with Maurice's message to his uncle : Mansfeldt took it, and smiled as he received it.

Henry upon his arrival, found the party assembled at supper, an early meal in those days. As soon as he had finished his narrative and they had quitted the table, Mansfeldt claimed Heideck's attention for a few minutes, and they retired into the governor's private room, to which the reader was introduced upon a former occasion. Mansfeldt drew from his finger the ring which he had received through Henry from Maurice, and observed :

“ The Duke as usual is wary ; let us see the dispatch of which this unconscious youth has been the bearer : the Elector no doubt has discovered the cause of his regret at leaving us, and was tolerably certain that in selecting him as his messenger, his escort would not be permitted to tarry by the way.”

He now touched an invisible spring in the apparently massive ring, and drew from

it a small strip of paper, on which was written in minute characters :

“Count Heideck for Wittemberg to-morrow ; leave Henry Mansfeldt to follow.”

“There again, the Duke is wise,” said Heideck, “for I much doubt if this mad-cap nephew of yours Count, has brought in either horse or man in fit condition to bear me company.”

The paper was destroyed, and Heideck went forth to make preparations for his departure in the morning, for the “to-morrow” commanded by Maurice, he knew to be the “to-morrow” after Henry’s arrival.

Thumelda rejoiced at the distinction bestowed on her Konrad, although some intimation of the fact from himself would have been an agreeable addition ; this however, Clotilda assured her could not have been possible, from the short space which intervened between Henry’s leave to visit them, and his departure.

When Heideck rejoined them, he asked Henry whether the Duke had limited him to half the time usually allowed as necessary for the performance of the journey from Wittemberg ; for, turning to Mansfeldt, he said,—

“ Neither man nor horse will be in a condition to return under three days at least, if then ; your nephew has shewn himself most dutiful in his desire to outstrip report.”

Mansfeldt shook his head.

“ Henry, when will you court some prudence as your companion ?”

“ I am doing so now, good uncle,” replied the youth, “ in the person of my fair cousin, but I was not aware that my rate of travelling was particularly expeditious.”

“ I fancy, my young friend,” observed Heideck, “ that those with you were not of your opinion ; and that the jaded animals, if they could speak, would tell a different tale. I know no man but Duke George who would put either to such a trial. I

thought of paying the Elector a visit myself, and bearing you company on your return, but your movements are too rapid for me."

"Oh! but Count, I shall take more time to return."

"I doubt it," retorted Heideck, "for you will linger here till the last moment: I shall therefore not trust you young gentleman, but by starting to-morrow precede you, and I have no doubt you will overtake me; but I recommend that your retrograde movements be a little more leisurely performed; for I question if the Elector will quite approve of this unmerciful use of his men and horses."

This was said jokingly, but it was a hint which the young man thought it might be expedient to take into consideration.

Henry, who had more taste for Mathilda's society than for Heideck's lectures, led her away, and when they reached the

gallery, entered more minutely into the particulars of his escape, and the recovery of the trinket which contained the precious lock of hair. Mathilda admired the quaint, antique, but solid case in which he had deposited this treasure ; and was not displeased at the trouble he had taken to procure it.

Love puts cold, heat, hunger, or thirst at defiance, but such intruders will sometimes assert their natural pretensions, in contradiction to the songs of inspired poets ; and on this occasion Mathilda, after an hour's conversation in a long cold gallery in the month of December, experienced a certain shivering which came creeping over her, with a numbness of that hand which had not been favoured by Henry's warm pressure, and suggested, that the conversation, though not so privately, might be carried on not less comfortably in a more temperate

atmosphere; and in spite of her lover's remonstrances, persisted in rejoining the party they had quitted.

Heideck, although he did not press on his journey with the ardour Henry had done, did not tarry by the way; when near Wittemberg he slackened his pace, and rode slowly through the streets; gave his people minute orders, chatted with the officers whom he met as he went through the passages and waiting rooms, and then desired a page to announce to the Elector, that when convenient he would pay his respects to him; at the same time desiring to be shown into an apartment that he might change his travelling dress.

The Elector sent to request his company at supper; Schwendi had spoken to Heideck on his arrival, and expected that he would be immediately closetted with the Duke, and therefore felt some surprise when on the

assembling of the guests some hours afterwards, he found by Maurice's greeting, that they had not met before.

"Your Highness will think me bold," observed Heideck aloud, "for volunteering my presence in Wittemberg; but Henry of Mansfeldt gave me such a glowing description of the festivities going on in your capital, that I could not resist the temptation of paying my respects to you; and at the same time witnessing some of the gay doings of which he spoke in such enthusiastic terms, although I feel that I am but a poor substitute for such a gallant young knight."

"I fear," replied the Elector, "that he has overcharged his picture with colour; I should not judge by his apparent alacrity to leave us, that he had derived much amusement from our pastimes, but I think I have discovered the secret of his indifference and of his preference for the society in Magdeburg; I trust we shall be more

fortunate in our efforts to detain you, Count."

Heideck bowed, and Maurice soon after left his guests, who appeared to have no inclination to abandon their deep potations. The varlets were kept in full occupation serving the wine. Schwendi had contrived to seat himself near Heideck, and as the juice of the grape circulated, engaged him in earnest conversation. By every art he essayed to draw from him the object of his visit to Wittemberg.

Heideck, in reply to one of his insidious questions, observed :

" My predilection for good cheer, Colonel, brought me hither, as well as the desire for change, and the love of pleasure; I am weary of my sojourn in the maiden city, of the governor's sober habits, (for he is no boon companion at a revel) and the regular routine; besides, I love the Elector, and partake the curiosity of my neighbours, to

spy a little into his future plans and movements ; these are not singular tastes, Colonel, eh ?”

Schwendi bit his lip.

“ Come, Colonel, a cup to the prosperity of Wittemberg. I have heard the Elector’s wine much praised, and in my small judgment, it does not belie its reputation.”

Heideck called to a page who had been appointed to serve him during the supper, and drained the goblet he brought. Schwendi followed his example ; he had watched with satisfaction the Count’s frequent libations,

“ Surely,” he thought, “ the man hath spoken truly, he possesseth an extraordinary capacity for wine.”

The attending page before mentioned, now advanced again, and presenting a jewelled goblet to Heideck ;

“ The Elector, Sir Count, left me in charge to beg that ere the party broke up, you would pledge his health in this cup.”

"Willingly, my good lad;" but rising as he took the goblet from the page's hand, said,

"Come gentlemen, fill; Colonel, you will bear me company," and nodding to the page; "a twin brother, youth, of this cup for the Colonel; for I am sure he cannot scruple with hearty good will to pledge with me so popular a toast."

Schwendi's cup was replenished, and the Elector's health drank with all the uproarious enthusiasm of men, who were already more than half intoxicated.

Schwendi could not refuse to follow Heideck's example, who drained his potion to the dregs, and turned the empty vessel on its brim upon the salver from which he had received it.

Schwendi had been cautious, and filled sparingly to the various toasts, but Heideck had plied him so perseveringly, that he was ruminating on a timely retreat before the last draught was presented to him.

When he attempted to rise, the lights appeared to be dancing about the table, which was at the same time as well as the room, performing a rotatory motion. There seemed to him to be no opening for egress, he therefore groped his way along the wall ; one of the attendants threw open the door, but by this time, his vision was so defective, and his legs so feeble, that he continued to feel his way with extended hands, and fell across the threshold. Heideck, with his arms folded, steadily watched his wavering movements, and when he saw him fairly settled without the power to rise, beckoned to the page, who removed a flambeau from one of the sockets, and by a private door, conducted him to the Elector's closet.

“ Well Heideck,” said Maurice, “ how fares the enemy, have you dislodged him ? You seem to walk firmly under my cup of strong waters.”

“ Faith, your Highness, for the space I

never left a field so thickly strewed ; you have given no quarter ; our brave Colonel headed his company and held out till the last, but has fallen in the outworks : your page would make a capital confessor, he has forced a penance of cold water upon me to-night, which I hope will wash out my sins, and which I shall long remember. If your Highness's good city be beleagured and you lack water within your garrison, put a divining rod in his hand, and beshrew me but he will find an ample supply."

Maurice with some gravity condoled with the Count, and complimented him upon his victory.

" In truth, your Highness, I have some reason to be proud thereof, for a more wary or obstinate enemy to deal with than your Austrian inmate, never came under my tactics. He would have gone on parrying my attacks with small arms till morning's dawn—if your Highness's well directed long gun had not struck him down ;

by my troth, if his Imperial Majesty were courteous, he would replenish your cellars, in consideration of the butts expended to fill those which he sends here empty in his service."

When Maurice had composed himself—for the Count's military upright carriage, with his sober serious way of relating Schwendi's defeat, were irresistibly amusing to him—he said, "what news, Count?"

"Nothing satisfactory, your Highness, more than doubtless has already been reported to you. Duke George carries on a cruel warfare, and causes a lamentable devastation in Thuringia. He scourges the land with an unsparing and unflinching hand; the Electors of Mentz, Treves, and Cologne have requested their dismissal from the Council of Trent, that they may provide against his inroads into their territories; Mentz has already suffered from his invasion."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the Elector stamping his foot impatiently, "such a blazing brand would ruin the holiest cause."

Heideck shrugged his shoulders.

"Your Highness," he observed, "should send your page to quench him; if he serve him as adroitly as he did me, he will not leave a spark in him;" then added seriously: "one cannot tell how the Emperor may take this, but I fear this comet will consume the substance of the land: his long smouldering in Magdeburg hath only given his pent up fiery nature time to gather force."

Maurice now detailed the detection of Bortoni, with the departure of the mission to the Emperor, and his faint hopes of its success; whether the answer which they might bring would decide him for peace or war, Mansfeldt's opinion would still be of value; if he returned with Henry his ap-

pearance at the court was less likely to excite remark “for,” added Maurice “we have other lynx’s eyes as well as those of Schwendi upon us. I know my trusty ministers Carlowitz and Schoenberg are equally in Granville’s pay; you will say, why not dismiss the traitors? simply because I know, and for some time have known them to be such, they are to me the most useful agents at my court; in ignorance that I have obtained the knowledge of their correspondence, they fancy that I trust them, and the cunning Granville swallows with avidity the artificial flies with which I bait my hooks; he will find that a “drunken German head,” can compound and administer from such vile drugs a draught of bitters, which will prove no loving cup for him, and teach a soberer estimation of his own policy. The difficulty is to find a fitting messenger for our dispatch to Magdeburg; to Hendrick alone can I trust the safe keeping of the

“one eyed spy,” this employment I cannot put on Konrad; the rough soldier considers the guarding of a prisoner in his line of duty; Konrad the civilian would flinch at the office of jailer over a felon; the latter I can ill spare, but I fear he must be the man; he is discreet, and Mansfeldt knows him.”

Konrad was now summoned. The few last days had wrought a marked change in his appearance. As the light fell upon his careworn countenance, neglected hair, and spiritless eye, the Elector looked at him in some surprise; he had not observed the alteration in him before.

“You are ill, Wolffenstein?”

Konrad stammered out a respectful negative, and assured his Highness that he was quite well enough to execute any commands he might have for him. The Duke notified to him his desire that he should quit the

city before dawn and make the best of his way to Magdeburg.

“Deliver my greeting to the Governor, and say that I require his presence and counsel; his earliest convenience will suit me best; Count Henry must return with his uncle; I need not recommend to you diligence and caution.”

While the Elector was speaking, Konrad’s face became flushed: he raised up his cap—(which had been dangling between his fingers by his side)—across his breast, and held it tightly with both hands, that their tremour might not be perceived.

“Excuse me to Count Mansfeldt for this unceremonious request,” added the Duke; “and now Count, I will accompany you to the Duchess. I have no further orders Wolffenstaff.”

As soon as Konrad gained his own chamber, he cast himself into a seat. When he had

been commanded into his Prince's presence, he had no anticipation of the trial which awaited him. Was there no other trusty messenger to be found for this service? but he knew the Duke never gave an order without reflection, and he could not question the propriety of this one, although he would have preferred that some other should have been chosen. If Thumelda were guilty, must he witness her degradation?

"Oh Heaven!" he exclaimed, "guilt and Thumelda associated in my thoughts? Shame Konrad! shame! would she thus condemn you upon any evidence? but alas how cruelly strong is the evidence, almost too strong to admit of disbelief."

He passed an hour as he had passed days and nights, torn by contending doubts and emotions, wishing to fathom but dreading to find the truth. His sense of duty at last aroused him to make preparations for his departure; he wished to seek repose for a

few hours, but the attempt was vain ; he would have been glad had his orders been to depart immediately, not from any desire to reach his destination, but that bodily exertion and movement might divide the torments of his mind ; he would have hailed the vilest drudgery, if it could have diverted his thoughts for however brief a space from his mental wretchedness. With alternate dreadand impatience he counted the waning hours, and finally started before the smallest symptom of light appeared.

As he approached towards the termination of his journey, his head fell on his breast, his rein dropped over his horse's mane, his cheek was blanched, he could not look at those towers where he was to learn his doom, but the reflection crossed him, that this delay was not consistent with the duty he owed his noble master. With a heavy sigh, he put his horse into a trot, and in a few minutes alighted in the Castle yard ; he

threw his bridle rein to a groom, and without lifting his eyes from the ground entered the hall, and desired a lacquey to have his coming announced as a messenger from Wittemberg, in haste for immediate speech with the Governor; during the short time he waited in the hall, all the circumstances of his last interview with Thumelda at the same spot recurred vividly to his memory; her reluctance to leave him, the gift of the fatal locket, which there he had placed in her hands; at that moment could she have been deceiving him? Oh! what distraction! Thumelda thus to deceive! the playmate of his infancy, the idol of his boyhood and youth, the daughter of the honest Krantz, the child of the virtuous Theresa. Oh! sorrow! sorrow! how willingly would he flee far away! what mattered it what became of him, or where he went? But his heart whispered to him; "your parents, Konrad," and a flood of tenderness for the

authors of his being brought tears into his eyes. “Ingrate! shall thy blighted hopes darken their remaining days with clouds of grief; wilt thou in thy selfish sorrow deprive them of the pride and prop of their old age? Oh, no! beloved ones! how in thought hath your son sinned against and wronged ye, my father! my mother!”

It was well that the return of the messenger obliged the unhappy youth to rouse himself, and bring his mind to bear upon the business he had to execute; the man requested him to follow him into the presence of Count Mansfeldt, who gave his ready assent, and notified his intention of setting out on the following morning.

“And now my brave young man,” he said, at the same time kindly taking his hand, “let me thank you, which I sincerely do, for the heroism which preserved our dear nephew to us; he is a frank-hearted, noble fellow, but too heedless of danger. Of

you, Wolffenstein, he speaks in the highest terms both of admiration and gratitude, and such encomiums your noble deed merits. You are under protection which renders any offer of future service from me nugatory; but the friendship of Albert of Mansfeldt may not be unacceptable."

Konrad disclaimed any merit, but assured him that in honouring him with his regard he had promised him that which was of most value to him, and that which he trusted it would never be his misfortune to forfeit.

"I fear it not, Wolffenstein, or I have not read you right; and now as I shall have some matters to arrange before I quit the city, I will request you to seek my nephew, and deliver to him the Elector's summons, for which I doubt if he is prepared, or will very willingly obey."

Konrad retired; another onerous duty was before him; but ere he reached the end

of the corridor, the object of his search accosted him.

Henry's salutation was warm and friendly, but Konrad was anxious to perform his mission, and then request the explanation he had determined to seek, but in which he had been disappointed. He delivered the short command with which he was charged from Duke Maurice.

Henry looked confused and annoyed, and suddenly started off to seek his uncle, bidding his preserver a brief good-morrow. Konrad looked after him.

"Foiled again," he said, "I give you credit, Count Henry, for not knowing the wrong you have done me;" then with loitering steps he pursued his way, hopeless of clearing up his suspicions before his return to Wittemberg.

Where was he to go? whom was he to seek? He had not the resolution to enquire

for Thumelda, although he felt that this was perhaps the course he ought to pursue; but if guilty? no, he could not, it was impossible.

He now hastened from the Castle, and wandered from street to street, without an object or an aim; he was weary, but could not rest; wanting refreshment, but could not eat; desiring intelligence, but shunning every one; miserable, but dwelling on his misery; needing consolation, but denying himself hope, and dreading again to enter the Castle till the shades of evening should screen him from observation.

“Konrad, surely Konrad,” said a voice behind him.

“Krantz!” cried the youth turning round, “not yet returned to Reiterstein.”

“You have given me a fine chase, young man,” returned the miller. “What may be your business, that you deign not even an enquiry for the miller or his daughter? have

your honours, Konrad Wolfenstaff, turned aside your friendship and your thoughts from us?"

"Herr Krantz, you know better; but the stricken deer seeks not the hunter who has given him his death wound; leave me, good Krantz, to you I must be silent, lest your heart should be crushed as mine is: to you I will not run the hazard of a question, though there be none other to relieve me from my fears. Oh! in pity leave me, good and valued friend;" and he moved forward.

"What ails you, Konrad?" said the miller; "I do not understand you. I trust no groundless jealousy."

Konrad groaned. "Seek not intelligence of me, Herr Krantz."

"Of whom, thou man of riddles?"

"Youadden me," cried Konrad desperately; "ask your daughter."

"Oh! as I thought; some lover's fancy."

Konrad laughed; but the miller when he looked upon him, saw no corresponding mirth in the working of his agonized features. It was a hollow, senseless laugh.

"Konrad, you have been drinking."

"Ay, truly have I," retorted the youth; "from a well nigh inexhaustible cup, which has not left my lips for days and nights, I have nearly drained it, but wish not you to pledge me. I beseech you, let me finish the intoxicating draught alone; ah, ah, you see I am greedy, my friend."

Krantz feared that Konrad's mind was wandering, and wished to soothe him.

"Come Konrad, come, no more of this; we will seek Thumelda."

"No, Krantz, I cannot; I am the last she will desire to see."

"Listen to me," said the now agitated father. "Thumelda you shall see, and in my presence. You have said too much, or not enough. Poor maiden, she has been

waiting ever since she heard of your arrival."

"Spare me," cried Konrad, "she watches not for me; I am but the bearer of unwelcome news."

"No more of this, young man," replied Krantz angrily; "let us on, I will not be denied;" and seizing him by the arm, he hurried him quickly forward, with a rapidity which Konrad could not resist. When they reached the Castle, the unhappy Wolffenstein turned suddenly, fronted the miller, looked mournfully in his face, seized both his hands, and said deliberately with a hollow voice :

"If I leave this town a maniac, Krantz, you must answer for it to my poor parents."

The miller again placed his arm within his own, led him into a chamber which had been appropriated to his use, and really fearing in his present state of mind to leave

his young friend alone, requested a lacquey to desire Mistress Thumelda to come to him without delay.

The poor girl was weeping, but obeyed the summons. She believed that Konrad's elevation had caused his neglect of her, and that her father had sent for her to comfort and console her. The first object her eye glanced upon, with his head bowed down, was Konrad ; no longer the handsome, gay Konrad, but a worn, pale being, with haggard cheeks, and sunken eyes. She stood stupefied and aghast at his altered appearance.

Krantz saw that neither had power to break silence ; he said seriously, "Thumelda, some heavy accusation lies against you ; what wrong have you done—of what breach of faith have you been guilty towards your betrothed ?"

"Wrong ! my father, none, nor breach of faith, unless I have misjudged him in par-

taking your fears that the miller's daughter is no longer a worthy alliance for the Elector's secretary."

"None other, are you sure, Thumelda?"

"None, my father."

"Where is thy locket, Thumelda?" said her lover mournfully; "on thy fair bosom, or transferred to one of higher grade than the Duke's poor secretary?"

"I know not, indeed, Konrad," she answered with emphasis; "I have it not; but truly cannot say who may now possess it."

"I can, Thumelda," replied Konrad in broken accents; "it lies in Count Henry's bosom, next his heart; while he gives his open vows to the lady Mathilda, in secret he cherishes this bauble."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried Thumelda; "impossible!" and crossing the room, she went up to him, pressing his arm, and looking at him in alarm,

"Are you mad!"

“Nearly so,” he replied; and his head again sank on his bosom.

“What means this, Konrad? what means this, Thumelda?” cried Krantz, now becoming alarmed for his child’s honour; “what locket? what of Count Henry?”

“I know not; indeed I know not, father,” answered Thumelda, wringing her hands; “Konrad did give me ere we parted a token; it was taken from me.”

“Thumelda, Count Henry wears—” began Konrad.

“Hold!” interrupted the miller; “how know you this?” turning fiercely to Konrad.

“I saw it,” he replied, almost choking, “when I slew the wolf by which he was beset; I found it among the fragments of his vest, and drew it from the jaws of the expiring brute; I returned it to him, and he thanked me in warmer terms for that restoration, than for his life which I had preserved. I know no more; since that

fatal hour, sleep has scarcely closed my eyes, or food passed my lips; my brain turns, Krantz; is this enough, or will you complete your work?"

The miller with a firm step strode to the door and said in a determined tone, "Thumelda, and you, Konrad, remain where you are."

The unhappy girl sat bathed in tears: her companion neither moved nor spoke.

Ere long, hasty steps approached; the door was thrown open, and the miller re-entered accompanied by Count Henry, who looked at the group in astonishment.

Krantz pointed to his child.

"I have taken the liberty, Count Henry, of seeking you, to save the name of that maiden from aspersion. Know you aught to her disparagement?"

"Nought, my good fellow,—who shall dare say I do?"

"Do you possess a trinket, her gift?"

“ Assuredly not,” replied Henry, smiling ; “ what can prompt you to propose such a question to me ?”

“ Wolffenstein affirms that a bauble, containing hair, is worn by you, which was a gift to my child from him.”

“ It is true, miller, I have an antique locket, containing hair; but these are strange demands,” he added, somewhat haughtily, “ and I think not quite befitting.”

“ Pardon me, Count,” replied Krantz, “ I grant they seem unwarranted; but I am a father, and,” he added, with strong emotion, “ your answers nearly concern my happiness and my child’s honour. As her father, I humbly crave that you will permit her to inspect that locket.”

Krantz’s manner was respectful, but so agitated, that Henry could not refuse. His love for his cousin was no secret ; therefore why should he deny a request so simple, and for which, from the urgency of the mil-

ler's manner, he concluded he must have some good reason? He drew forth the chain and locket, and placed them in Krantz's hands.

"Thumelda, look at this."

"It is mine!" she cried, "it was the gift of Konrad. Count Henry, how came you by it, may I ask?"

"I bought it," answered Henry.

Konrad shook his head.

"How did you lose it, Thumelda?" demanded her father.

"On that day, father, when the villain Hartorff assaulted me, of which adventure Konrad is in ignorance. The Lady Clotilda knows how many a tear she has seen me shed for the loss of Konrad's parting gift."

Poor Konrad gasped; he bent forward with straining eyes.

Henry related the purchase of the trinket at the goldsmith's shop. He believed that the hair which it then contained, and which

he had replaced by the Lady Mathilda's, was still in his possession."

"Look, father! look!" exclaimed Thumelda, joyfully; "this bright hair is of a lighter shade than mine!"

Konrad eagerly snatched the locket from her, and compared it with her darker tresses. He looked around as one awaking from a trance: hope and joy lighted up his pallid countenance.

Thumelda, amidst her tears, which still flowed, continued:

"The kind youth who from the crowd called to Sir Otho to save me from that monster, seeing me so distressed at my loss, made every search—but in vain. I remember well, whilst I struggled against the villain, the ribbon was torn from my neck, and doubtless he retained my treasure. On the inside Konrad scratched a K; and when he did so, in sport I told him I was not

likely to forget the donor. The Lady Mathilda herself has spoken to me about it."

"Are you satisfied, Konrad?" said her father.

"Oh! yes, Heaven be praised! My Thumelda," he exclaimed, starting to her side, "forgive my base suspicions—my own, my long-beloved! Heaven alone knows the suffering I have endured! Krantz, pardon me — pardon, Thumelda — pardon, Count Henry. Thumelda, tell me you forgive me, for sorely I have wronged you, my affianced one."

"Konrad," said Krantz, mildly, "I grant that you had some reason for your doubts—but why did you nurse and brood over them? Your duty was to have sought me when you quitted Count Mansfeldt."

"Was it for me," replied Konrad, "even had I known you were still in Magdeburg, to accuse the daughter to the parent—to

accuse my betrothed one upon suspicion, strong as it was, but unconfirmed? No, Krantz, from Count Henry I would have demanded an explanation, but he knows his sudden journey denied me the possibility of doing so. Again to-day I sought him; but ere I could claim his attention, he turned abruptly from me, and I saw no chance before my return to Wittemberg of gaining speech with him."

Krantz's honest face lighted up with joy: he clasped them in his arms.

"Bless you, my children! Konrad, let this be a last warning to you, not to judge hastily from appearances."

"Mistress Thumelda," said Henry, "permit me to retain this trinket till I can procure another."

Thumelda's escape from Hartorff was now related. Henry gave the description of the supposed merchant; but from Hartorff's complete transformation, there was little

resemblance to the man: they could only conclude that he had disposed of the locket for money.

The hours no longer lagged. Thumelda rejoined the Lady Clotilda, who rejoiced to see the smile on her happy face: she would not detain her. Henry ordered supper to be taken to them, that they might not suffer interruption. Krantz could not but feel pity for all the misery Konrad had experienced, or in his heart blame him for his persevering silence.

The night was far advanced ere they parted; but the youth in his own mind determined that on his return to Wittemberg he would endeavour, with the assistance of the goldsmith, to trace Hartorff, or at least to find the person from whom Count Henry had purchased the trinket.

## CHAPTER IV.

WHILE the village of Reiterstein and the inhabitants of the mill were enjoying protection from the security afforded by the soldiers, the surrounding country was infested by a band of marauders; traders from Kemnitz and the neighbouring towns feared to traverse the forests or heaths without a strong escort; robberies were occasionally perpetrated almost under the very walls; and before a body of men

could turn out in pursuit of the depredators, they were off with their booty.

Much valuable property as well as money had thus been wrested from many unfortunate persons who, mulcted and maltreated, could only give contradictory accounts of their assailants, so dexterously did they conduct their attacks. One party represented itself as plundered and beaten by men in the garb of hunters; another said that their assailants were clad in leathern doublets; a third that they were cased in steel.

A rich burgher returning from Leipsic with merchandise, accompanied by four servants, who had been suddenly surprised at mid-day, his people disarmed, his goods carried off, swore before the authorities, that the band consisting of eight or ten men, were wholly black from head to foot; that the work of spoliation was conducted with a rapidity which no human

hands could have achieved, and that their horses were so fleet, they must be winged. Some allowance was made for the good burgher's fears, who had hardly recovered from his panic, but his servants corroborated his deposition ; there had been no murder, because there had been no time for resistance.

Another party declared that the demons (for such he believed them to be) were white, and that as the ground was covered with snow, their approach was not perceived till every man was knocked from his horse ; before they came to their senses and recovered their legs, the plunderers were away with their spoil.

Many other tales of a like nature did not lose in the transmission from mouth to mouth, but spread terror from town to town. As the peasantry were left in peace, they did not much concern themselves in seeking for or giving any information of these

brigands, as by so doing they might possibly expose themselves to destruction ; the soldiers quartered in the village and at the mill took no part in searching for these spoliators, their orders were to prevent the Baron's exactions on certain lands in the neighbourhood.

In the mean time Reiterstein, who had thus been placed under check, still continued to expect Hartorff. From his prolonged absence, he began to fear that his hurts had proved mortal,—not an unlikely event to happen to a person whose constitution was inflamed by hard drinking. It was now nearly a month since he had left him on his sick bed ; it was true, the journey was long, and the season unfavourable for a man scarcely convalescent ; nor did Ludwig return ; probably if Hartorff was still in existence, he might be waiting for him ; the Baron had no companion, and apparently little occupation ; he carefully

inspected his men and their appointments, was much in his stables, surveyed minutely his stronghold, and made additional defences to it; often rode forth to the chase, and generally finished his evenings over the wine flask; he became more dark and morose than ever.

It was rumoured that travellers, as well as bears and wolves, were hunted by the inmates of the Castle, for the Baron was not the man to sit peaceably down without some indemnification for the lands which had been wrested from him. These were merely conjectures not borne out by strong evidence; it was certain that he often watched from the highest tower; that parties of ten and twenty left the Castle at all hours of the day, but more generally returned during the night; still they always set out with their dogs, either in their ordinary attire or in hunting garbs.

The Baron's men were a motley crew:

Italians, Spaniards, with some outcasts from the free towns; whatever his pursuits might be, if (as it was whispered) they were not lawful, they were carried on with a dexterity and secrecy which defied detection, nor did the description of the numbers and appearance of the band which spread such consternation, more especially round Kemnitz and its vicinity, tally at any time with that of the parties who issued from the fortress.

In consequence of these continual outrages, many preventive as well as active measures were taken by the magistrates; a good look out was kept from the walls, horses ready saddled, with men to mount them (on the first alarm) and attack the robbers, were housed and stabled near the gates. These precautions preserved the passengers from being pillaged so close to the town; the burghers who had goods of value to transport took care to travel

in large parties armed and guarded, but still the evil was not rooted out, and the traffic of the hucksters, pedlars, and minor merchants, who had not influence to engage, and could not afford to pay for protection, was ruinously injured; in fact their trade was nearly stopped.

From the various reports brought in by those who had been laid under contribution, superstitious fancies of supernatural agents, began to circulate among the common people, who hardly considered themselves safe in the streets; the magistrates tried every means to disabuse them of such unfounded terrors, for these idle stories gave the freebooters an immense advantage; such follies were confined to the ignorant, but still, they produced a bad effect, spread like a contagion, and made it the more necessary that greater vigilance should be used. Scouring parties were ordered out, but they returned as they went, without

any intelligence ; and the lower mechanics with the poorer class of women, became more confirmed in their belief, that mortals could not thus appear under so many different guises, vanish, and elude all attempts at discovery.

It was in vain to argue against their ignorance and superstition ; or try to convince them, that spirits could have no use for stuffs, or such wares as were plundered from merchants and travellers. There was force enough in the town and Castle to chase away, or capture the villains, but where to find them ? this was the question, and one which nobody could answer ; it was only to be hoped that success would make these brigands too bold, and lead to their detection. Thus thought the wiser heads, and therefore finding all other means fail, at last apparently relaxed their endeavours, and pretended to treat the matter lightly, still keeping watch around the town.

Kemnitz was an old town, full of crooked streets, narrow ways, tall, tottering over-hanging gables, corners, angles, and short turns ; but in these days a flourishing place, possessing some trade, and the population industrious : under the protection of its Castle, which stood a mile beyond the gates, it enjoyed tolerable security. Reiterstein would often make his appearance in its market place, accompanied by two or three of his German followers ; he was generally attired in his hunting garb, or in the suit of a civilian ; for sometimes he would change his mind after he had started for the chase, send home the greater number of his dogs, and part of his retinue, pursue his ride to Kemnitz, dismount, and wrapping his cloak around him, traverse the streets in all directions, giving orders for horse gear, hunting spears, and other articles, which his people were to fetch ; and then whistling to his two favourite hounds,

retrace his way homewards. He had been so rarely at Reiterstein of late years that he had no acquaintances in the town, but would sometimes stop at the inn for refreshment, and gather from mine host the news of the day; the worthy man's conversation generally turned upon the last robbery, with the means taken to bring the depredators to justice, and he also expatiated loudly and at length upon the absurd fears of the people. The Baron laughed as mine host recounted the story of the black spirits and the white spirits, and asked him whether he believed in such things.

“It is hard to say, noble sir,” he replied, “Herr Bickerstaff is a respectable burgher, backed by his four servants, who swear to the black spirits; here on the other hand a huckster, in company with two pedlars, a wooldresser and prentice weaver, who

equally swear to the white ones ; which is one to believe ?”

“ That black is white, I suppose,” said the Baron with a grin ; “ perhaps the black demons rode in the moonlight, and so your huckster, pedlars, prentice, and wooldresser were deceived.”

“ But the snow was on the ground, Mein Herr, which would make them look blacker still.”

“ They always paint these gentry blacker than they are, you know,” retorted the Baron.

“ Well, demons or no demons,” said the man, “ it is certain our people lost their wares, and got nothing but knocks and fright, in exchange for their merchandize to bring home from such a market ; a bad payment for those who have got to live by their trade ; it is something new of late in these parts, and sets all the tongues in the

town wagging like bell clappers : after one of these encounters with the marauders, one can hardly hear the church chimes for their chatter ; when the thieves made free with their bales and boxes, no doubt their teeth set their tongues the example."

At the word thieves, a slight wince of the Baron's mouth might have been perceived if mine host had happened to have observed it.

"I have heard of these stories before," he remarked, "why do not your magistrates put down such irregularities?"

"They have tried," answered his informant with a knowing wink, "and that is what the people say ; that with all their footmen and horsemen, they cannot rout them out ; and that they must have been caught before this, if they were flesh and blood ; not that I believe such nonsense, only this, that they are clever fellows at their trade ; but now I hear they mean to

call in their scouts, and just stay quiet, and so lure them on like, and see if they cannot cage them that way, good luck for them who have no occasion to go out of the town say I, but I think their sport is nearly over."

"Why so, my friend?"

"Because no one will quit the town but in well armed companies, too many for them; our people when they leave the gates with their light waggons, and pack horses, are bristled with swords, pistols, pikes and daggers, for all the world like a herd of hedgehogs, a murrain take the hounds to give honest people so much trouble, and not let them keep their own; I should like to fill my empty casks with such gentry, and roll them down into the river; if they are fiery devils, the women would only have to dip their buckets for warm water. This comes of these wars and fighting; when they have once got their

hands into blood spilling and pillaging, they can't keep them out of their neighbours pockets, or from their throats."

" Why," observed the Baron, " they say that Duke Maurice has disbanded his army."

" Ay, ay," responded mine host, " they are not his Saxons who do such things ; they are glad enough to get home to their own hearths and their own families : it is these foreign fellows, whose help they call in, because they can't cut and hack each other to pieces fast enough. When they get no more pay, they have no honest calling to turn to : they can't speak Saxon speech, or dress Saxon wool : if I had my will, I would give them Saxon hemp, and stop their tongues altogether :—but the flask is out, noble sir ; shall I fetch another ?"

" No more," said the Baron, throwing his reckoning on the table, and at the same time addressing his communicative host, " I have given orders in the town for sundry

goods : I shall possibly send a waggon with some of my people to fetch them. They will put up here ; see that you give them good entertainment."

He then desired his horses to be brought out, and left mine host, who with cap in hand watched the departure of his guest to find another listener, and who, as he saw the flakes of snow descending, shook himself, and brushing his sleeve, said—

" Rather he than I !"

Whether this self-gratulation proceeded from the comfortable idea that he was safe from the predatory gentry who had formed the topic of their conversation, or that he was housed from the weather, is a conjecture left to the sagacity of the reader to solve, for he did not explain himself further than is written down ; but retired to the chimney-corner, to restore the caloric expended before his own door, in doing parting civilities to the Baron.

The wind was bitterly keen, the snow was falling fast and thick, while the overhanging clouds were heavy and loaded.

The Baron made a rapid journey back to Reiterstein. He was soon seated by the blazing logs, which were piled on the wide hearth: he threw his cloak over a high-backed settle to dry, and then applied himself to the companion of his lonely hours, which was always ready at his elbow to answer his call, and his exactions were not a few upon the friendly wine-flask. For a time he drank and thought, and as the warmth shed its genial influence, dozed, while the wood crackled, and threw out lively sparks of fire. Although he cursed, because it was his habit to swear as well as to drink, he was glad, for his dreams were not pleasant; then he heaped more fuel, called for more wine and lights, and pondered on many things gone by and to come. His reflections probably were not more agreeable

than his dreams; for he started up, paced about, clenched his hands, renewed his draught, then threw himself again into his seat.

The wind howled wildly round the Castle, and whistled through the loop-holes; the soldiers in the hall were drinking, singing, and shouting in their various dialects—the watch-word was lost in the united din of the voices, and the bellowing of the wind; but finally all became calm, the wind sank, the snow came steadily down, the men had emptied their flagons, retired to their quarters, and the step of the sentinel could be heard, as he turned the angle on that side of the building.

Again the Baron had slept; he roused himself, rose, trimmed his lamp, threw his cloak, which was now dry, over his shoulders, clasped it round his neck, put on his bonnet, and drawing a key from his pocket, opened a cabinet of curiously carved oak,

which stood in the corner: from this he took a bunch of keys; then opening a low door, lamp in hand, proceeded through galleries and empty chambers; in the last of these he withdrew a sliding panel, which concealed another door; to this he applied a key from the bunch in his hand; he passed onwards, closing both after him.

At the end of a narrow passage, he descended a steep flight of steps, and after other applications of his keys and some turns, entered a dry and spacious vault, around which were lying various bales of goods, armour, with warlike instruments; a sort of warehouse, containing a motley collection of portable goods of all descriptions. The bales had evidently been newly made up for easy transportation, as the old covers, with the private marks of the owners, were thrown together in a corner. He advanced to a recess, and unlocked a well-concealed massy door, studded with iron nails, cramps,

hinges, and bolts. On shelves within were ranged goblets, tankards, cups, and flagons of silver and gold, of different shapes and sizes, jewelled ornaments, stones and gems of value which had been wrenched from their settings, also bags of money. He gloated with a miser's pleasure over his hoards, saying to himself—

“ I will add to these treasures before I have done. Duke Maurice, Reiterstein is not ruined yet; the spoil of your subjects has helped to swell this mass, and has paid back in part, and shall refund still more, in compensation for what you have wrested from him, and you will be cunning, my Lady Cousin, while I hold this Castle, to extract from me your portion of these monies, the golden proceeds from your rich lands; but we must see to dispose of these more bulky wares to advantage ; some will be required for home consumption. Hang that fellow, Hartorff, I need his assistance for

this business, but further his greedy eye shall not pry. I should not have a ducat, golden vessel, or jewel left, if he once got scent of the treasure."

He now removed one of the heavy bags of coin, placed it under his cloak, reclosed the door, took up the lamp, retrud his steps, and was soon again within the influence of the burning logs ; the money was counted, a book of calculations drawn from the cabinet, studied, and then with keys and money, re-placed ; he rubbed his hands over the glowing embers, and finished his flask.

On the following morning, the Baron distributed a portion of the golden ducats among his men, in payment of their extra service as agreed upon. The storm of the preceding night had entirely passed away, and the sun now shone out upon the frozen snow, which glittered and sparkled under its cheering beams.

The fields and heaths were deeply covered,

the trees were festooned with its bridal like wreaths, each spray of weeping birch and quivering aspen, was feathered to its tip with hoar frost, and their slender branches bent down in graceful curves; the blue smoke from the village hearths curled up perpendicularly from the whitened roofs of thatch, for there was scarcely a breath of wind to impede its upward course, or disperse its continuous column, till a fresh issue from below broke through its vapoury head, dividing it right and left, and floating it into the thin atmosphere. The wind during the night, in the more open places, had drifted winter's blanched winding sheet into miniature waves, or where it had encountered any obstacle, piled it on high in toppling banks.

Unless to a person well acquainted with the country, it would have been difficult to find a track, for the drifts had filled up the deep, as well as the shallow places; and had

given the most uneven parts the appearance of a dead level; thus overlaying the earth with a universal mantle of pure white, and leaving to the wayfarer no land-marks, unless here and there a tree, distinguishable by its dark stem, whose tufted head was bowed under the weight with which winter's stern hand had burthened it; or a peasant's homestead, betrayed by its smoke and dark sides; the barking of dogs, guarding the farm yards from the attacks of wolves, were the only sounds which broke upon the ear.

Notwithstanding these impediments, a horseman who was well protected from the cold, made his way steadily onwards; his stout cloak covered his saddle bags, as well as his person; he seemed not at fault, although the appearance of the country was changed by its new garb; his hat was slouched over his eyes, partly to shade them from the dazzling reflection of the interminable sheet of white around, as well as

to save them from the biting frost. He every now and then changed his rein from hand to hand, keeping up circulation in the one at liberty, by thrusting it into the breast of his doublet; he had emerged from the forest, and left it an hour's ride behind him; in the distance before him, on an elevated knoll, rose the dark towers of Reiterstein. In half an hour these were again lost to view, as he entered a broad path between two low banks, on which the snow was piled high above his head, forming not a rocky, but a snow pass, for the wind had driven it against the stunted shrubs and brushwood, which bordered their edges, but had left the pathway clear from the heavier drift. He had ridden forward about a hundred yards, when his way was impeded by an object, which as white as the snow, arose from it.

His horse started at the figure, two similar forms on each side jerked him from his

stirrups, he fell forward on his face against the bank, and was forcibly held down by them, while his first assailant rifled his doublet, and eased him of his purse and pistols.

When the booty was secured, they relaxed their hold, threatened him at the same time with death, if he continued his journey before half an hour had elapsed after their departure, or if he attempted pursuit. They then left him; the overthrown horseman arose, shook and readjusted his cloak, beat the snow from his hat, cursed his ill luck, and after walking briskly backwards and forwards for the time prescribed, made his way to the end of this temporary defile. Here he found his horse, disburthened of his saddle bags, but as he had no more to lose, he was tolerably certain of escaping further molestation, therefore mounted with much composure, and prosecuted his journey.

The Baron, who had just finished his daily

inspection of his stud, and was striding up and down the ramparts, more for want of occupation than for exercise, and was at the same time revolving many undigested plans in his mind, was interrupted by Brandt's hasty approach.

"Sir Baron," he said in some trepidation, "there is a traveller at the gate, who knocks and holloas, and will take no denial, he says he must and will see you."

"What is he like?"

"He is well mounted; I could not see his face or his person, for he is muffled to the eyes."

"Then give his horse to a groom, and bring him into the hall; unless he can give good reason for his visit, he shall be in no hurry to repeat it."

Brandt retired, and the Baron entered the hall, to wait for the appearance of the persevering intruder, whom on his advance he addressed haughtily:

“Here Hans, take his cloak and hat, you should know better, fellow, than to stand before me covered.”

The Baron was obeyed, and a simple burgher stood before him.

“And now your business with me?”

“Noble Baron, about five miles from hence, I was waylaid and robbed, and am come to claim your assistance for the restitution of my property.”

“Man,” exclaimed the Baron angrily, “do you suppose that all the freebooters in the neighbourhood come under my jurisdiction, or that I am to play knight errant to every travelling huckster and pedlar.”

“I am neither,” replied the man sturdily, “but a respectable burgher from Ghent, and lastly from Wittemberg, and require as I said, restitution of my property.”

“Scoundrel,” cried the Baron still more enraged, “do you expect me to be banker

for all the cut purses who may lurk in my vicinity?"

"I expect nevertheless, noble sir, that you will see me righted, and I know that you can do so, ay, and have my money, my saddle bags, and my pistols restored to me."

"The fellow is mad," exclaimed the Baron, "he has been affrighted out of his wits. What have I to do with the foul doublet and hose you may choose to carry at your saddle bow? you impudent varlet, get you gone."

"I am no varlet, and I will not move from this spot till my money and my goods are given back to me, and moreover I will force you to do it at last."

The Baron looked at the man in amazement; and then roared out:

"Here you Brandt, call Wilhelm and Pedro, give this stuttering impudent pedlar a shroud in the snow which you have

cleared from the yard, and then trundle him over the ramparts."

The men advanced to seize the resisting struggling burgher.

"Is this the reception, Baron, you give—"

"Off with him!" shouted the Baron.

"Is this the reception you give your lieutenant, poor Hartorff?"

"Hartorff?" cried Reiterstein.

"Yes truly," rejoined the other, speaking in his natural voice, "you propose to give me a cold welcome."

"Confound you," said his master, "you had nearly paid for your mummery."

The Baron dismissed Brandt and his fellow.

"And now pray what led you, my mountebank lieutenant, to suppose that my people had robbed you? the bungling knaves!"

"By no means my redoubted master, you accuse them wrongfully; I never saw anything better done, or a traveller more adroitly

handled ; they must have had practice of late ; but you forget, that I know these are old pastimes of yours, and the fellows were so well drilled, I could not doubt who was their commanding officer ; but, with your leave, I will enquire after my property ; I am half frozen and famished, and shall be glad to fortify myself for my journey into the Castle ditch."

Hartorff in the course of two hours was in close conference with the robber noble ; he detailed his adventures, and assured the Baron, that finding Duke Maurice had returned to Wittemberg, his desire of visiting that place had arisen solely from his anxiety to gain information for his noble commander's guidance : of this his auditor believed just as much as was really the truth ; but it suited his purpose to assure Hartorff that he did not doubt his zeal or attachment. Self-interest is the only bond which can unite villains, the storm of bad passions in one

moment may snap the loose and rotten tie, as the wind lays low the decayed and sapless tree ; that he had contrived to amass a considerable sum by successful, though not fair play, in the several games at which he was an adept, was palpable, by the bag of money which was now on the table between them, and had been delivered to the Baron by his agents but a few minutes before the lieutenant's arrival ; he could not therefore plead poverty which it had been his intention to do, and the share which he would have claimed of the productive robber warfare which had been going on during his absence, went to swell the Baron's hoards. To do him justice, he spoke with some gratitude of the friar's medical abilities and charitable care of him. In continuation of his narrative he added—

“ Not knowing the warfare which was carrying on here against the citizens' purses, I should have remained some time longer in

my quarters, which I found profitable and comfortable, and where I was likely to pick up many useful hints ; but that puritanical scribe Konrad, I spied out, was sent off to Magdeburg with despatches, where I suppose he got wind of my escapade with his dark-eyed beauty, and the locket affair, for, assisted by Count Henry of Mansfeldt, he was peering into every hole and corner to discover if I was in the town. This I found out, from some inquisitive questions put to me by the goldsmith and the tavern keeper where I used to meet Bortoni ; I discovered also that Hornbook, who is as cunning as a fox, although he could not track me or my abode, had visited all the stables in the town, and had been minutely overhauling my horse ; so I thought it time to be off, and I was not too fast in coming to this conclusion, for scarcely had I cleared the town when I saw from a rising ground, a party coming full tilt after me. However, I had

got the start, and as my horse was fresh and in wind, gave them but little chance of overtaking me. It seems he is in high favour with the Elector for saving the strippling Henry of Mansfeldt's life ; and I knew not how he might view the matter, and then my league with Bortoni might by some chance come to light. I lost a good harvest there for both of us. I suspect if he had lived he would have put us in the right road ; but in the name of wonder, what is the meaning of all these soldiers being quartered in the village ; I met several as I passed through ; I should think they must interfere with your levies in the neighbourhood.”

It was now the Baron's turn to account for the presence of this force at Reiterstein, and relate the causes which had led to his being saddled with such unwelcome checks.

“ Wheugh !” whistled Hartorff, “ this is a bad business ;” and in his own mind he began to think he might have sought some

better theatre for the exertion of his abilities; but then he considered his master was fertile in resources, and would contrive to fill his coffers by some means or other: besides, he still retained his stronghold, and a good force to back him.

What Hartorff gained he kept for himself. In that which he unlawfully assisted his commander to seize, he claimed a share, and lived well at free quarters; therefore he became reconciled to his measures. Before they separated, many things were discussed.

Ere ten days had passed, two light waggons well loaded, under Hartorff's escort, (who on this occasion resumed and further perfected his burgher disguise) had departed for and returned from Leipsic. The lieutenant, retaining a handsome per centage for himself on the merchandize sold, delivered the remaining proceeds into the Baron's hands, who lodged them safely in his concealed bank.

Hartorff had neither seen nor heard anything of Ludwig ; nor was it likely he could have done so, if, as the Baron supposed, he had gone to Magdeburg.

"I expected," he added, "to find him here ; his loss, if he does not return, will be a gain—for I do not fancy our present trade would be much to his taste. You always thought the fellow better suited to our purposes than he was."

"That is to say," replied Reiterstein, "that he was not scrupulous."

"Exactly so," answered the lieutenant.

"Perhaps it is as well that he is gone," added his master ; "but his honesty has been of some account to me, for he looked well to matters while I was away."

## CHAPTER V.

To narrate all the discussions, or to enter into all the particulars of the negociations which were carried on at this time between the Emperor and Maurice, for the safe conduct of the deputies who were to be sent by the Lutheran Princes to settle religious differences, would be to involve the reader in details not only out of place in a romance, but also more likely to weary than to interest; we shall therefore pass by many things which may be found in authors who

wrote diffusely on these matters at this period, and offer as an excuse for such omissions the desire to amuse by touching rather upon the most prominent events of a laical character, and which are more in the province of such a work as this to weave into its web of many colours.

“ You have scarcely slept upon my wishes my good friend,” said Maurice addressing Mansfeldt, who at an early hour had just alighted from his horse, and was accompanied by Count Heideck into the Elector’s presence, “ and at the expense of your own rest, have timed well your visit, while those are indulging still in repose, who by their treachery deny it to their Prince.”

“ I judged,” replied Mansfeldt, “ that this hour, unseasonable to others, would be most agreeable to your Highness; I grieve that you should be subjected to the necessity of such watchfulness.”

“ It is better Count, that I should abridge

my needful rest, than sleep in blind security and wake to find that I have slept too long. My deputies returned last night; I anticipated the answer which they have brought. As I expected their return, I was not willing to lose time in deciding upon such measures as must be consequent upon that answer; had his Imperial Majesty responded to my wishes (certainly not to my hopes,) I should still have derived benefit from your able counsel; I have however although unwillingly, been compelled to succumb to the necessity of the occasion, not studying your convenience as I could wish."

"My duty is my convenience, and resolves itself into a pleasure, when your Highness deigns to call in the feeble support of my opinion upon matters so nearly concerning your own interest."

"The Emperor," pursued Maurice, "still evades decision upon any of the points proposed to him; declares his willingness

to treat them with partiality, and assures the ambassadors of those powers associated with me in support of our demands, that their intercession has had its due weight and influence. He further desires them to notify these sentiments to their own courts, but that he withholds any final settlement until he can confer with me in person, which he expects to do. Thus he spoke by his ministers, thus he expressed himself to the ambassadors and deputies, and thus he still answers my persevering remonstrances."

"Does your Highness rely on such assurances?"

"No, Mansfeldt, I dare not; the Landgrave must be free."

"Your Highness then has decided———"

"To prepare for war," interrupted Maurice firmly, "his crooked policy has stigmatised me with the name of domestic traitor; I grieve that blood must wash out the foul stain. You know I have foreseen this, and

am prepared to trust to arms, since fair entreaties have failed to prevail. It is for you and my friends to assist in furthering my designs without creating suspicion of my intentions; daily I expect the ambassadors from France."

Maurice now detailed, explained, and descanted upon his ultimate views, and then retired to break the ill success of his mission to his Duchess, who being less acquainted with the character of the Emperor, and the influence of his wily counsellors, and judging according to the justice of the cause, as those of pure and honest hearts are prone to judge, had been more sanguine than her husband as to the success of the last mission, so powerfully backed. He knew the man, and the tortuous windings of his crafty mind, a labyrinth of deceit, and was well aware of the sway which he permitted Granville and Gonsanque to exercise over him.

The Elector would not respond to, or

buoy up her hopes, although he could not endure to crush them, for who can bear to banish the brief respite from woe which hope brings, to save from utter despondency those whom we love ?

The voice of affection is perhaps the fittest to prepare the destined sufferer for a tale of sorrow, because its tender sympathy pours in a healing balm while it reluctantly inflicts the wound, but the task is a hard one, and few are equal to its performance.

As Maurice passed through the private apartments to seek his wife, he weighed, and reconsidered his words, and refashioned his bearing, in the manner most likely to soothe and reconcile her to the failure of the embassy, upon the desired issue of which she had built such sanguine hopes. War, the alternative upon which he had decided for the enlargement of the entrapped Landgrave, would rather increase than assuage

her grief; it was an adventurous measure, perilous for her husband, and if unfortunate in its termination, would perhaps confirm and increase the cruel ill-usage under which her beloved parent languished. He knew she would be watching for his coming; he had concealed from her the return of the deputies on the previous evening, and hoped his slow and reluctant step might now in some degree prepare her for the ungrateful news he was compelled to communicate.

As he entered, he found her clasped in the arms of her brother. Their agitation so completely absorbed them, that his approach was unperceived by either. Their sorrow was his sorrow, and his heart smote him that his credulity had caused him to witness a scene, of which he felt he had been in part the origin.

The Electress, as she raised her head from her brother's shoulder, saw the dis-

tress which was visibly depicted on her Maurice's countenance as he stood with folded arms contemplating them. The youth's back was to him, but the exclamation of "My Husband!" by the Electress, announced to William of Hesse the presence of his brother-in-law.

The Elector took him warmly by the hand, but the young Prince did not so cordially return the pressure.

"Perhaps, Duke, I am unwelcome."

Maurice looked at him reproachfully and replied—

"Unwelcome? Never!—and I trust you will not refuse to combine with me in speaking words of comfort and fortitude to our beloved Agnes."

"Then again, my Maurice, you have failed?" said she, looking sadly in his face.

"Not entirely, my love; as usual fair speeches, but evasive concessions."

"And is it to be thus for ever?" asked William.

"No;" returned the Elector with vehemence; "think you, good brother, that Maurice hath not heart to prize his domestic happiness? Think you that the tears of this loved one," embracing his wife, "fall like pilgrims' drops, on cold marble, which the first beam from morning's sunny light dries from its polished surface? Think you that Maurice holds his honour as a bubble, which the breath of every malicious fool may bandy to and fro, and burst with its tainted scandal into air. Think you that with Maurice, oaths are unsanctified and idle words? My Agnes," he added more calmly as he again folded her in his arms, "knows better, but," turning towards the Prince, "I cannot blame you, brother, you are a son, and would be an unworthy one if our unhappy father's vile durance pressed less heavily on your duty and affection. If

your judgment of me errs, I will fain believe it is warped by the continual alternations of hope and despondency, to which our reiterated and wasted negotiations have given rise. As I intended honestly when I took upon myself a responsibility which has nearly overwhelmed me, so I intend to act faithfully, and liberate our father, which by Heaven ! if it be in the power of man to do, I will do ! I can pardon doubts which are not offensive, because natural, and opinions which weigh not because they are fallacious."

The Prince kept his eye fixed on the Duke as if he would read his inmost soul, and could glean the truth of his declarations and the workings of his mind from his face, for he still distrusted him, and doubted if he would really risk so much for the object they both had in view; but Maurice's brow was fair and open, his eyes were full of fire, and each emphatic word evinced a

strong determination long brooded over, a decision delayed, but the more matured and immutable.

The Duchess gazed from her brother to her husband. Alas! she guessed too well from those speaking, flashing eyes, the inevitable resolution which he had formed, and she cast down hers in grief. She could not dissuade him, for she prized her husband's honour, while the love and duty of a child kept her silent; she could not persuade, for it was a hazardous measure ; her Maurice's life and possessions might be placed in jeopardy, but she drew comfort from the reliance she had ever found reason to place upon his consummate talents and prudence.

"Are you satisfied, my brother?" said the Elector, as he held out his hand to him.

"I am," replied the youth, now grasping heartily the proffered token of compact and brotherhood.

“ Precede me, then, to the Council ; declare boldly your errand before my ministers ; you must, however, interpret my reply according to your wishes, and what you know to be my intentions.”

Mansfeldt, Heideck, and Arnoldi, were among the members who awaited the Duke’s coming. Prince William of Hesse’s introduction among them caused some surprise, for his arrival was not known to all. The Duke welcomed him, and said, that by his presence in that assembly, he concluded business had brought him to his Court. He replied, it had done so. He came upon a matter which touched him nearly ; he came to learn what success had attended the late mediation in favour of his father.

Maurice handed him the letters, repeated the assurances he had received from the Emperor, and stated that his Imperial Majesty expressed himself anxious for his presence, that he might confer with him, and

settle all matters under discussion between them.

“And although,” pursued the Elector, “to leave my dominions in the present state of affairs, will be a serious inconvenience to me, I shall not hesitate to do so, for nothing is of deeper concern to me than the prolonged detention of the Landgrave.”

“This journey, Duke,” replied the Prince, “will be but a postponement of the question ; are we thus still to linger for mediations which avail nothing but to breed false hopes, while thus such fruitless delays absorb the time ? You know Duke Maurice, that our mother, borne down by ineffectual struggles against her adverse fortune, by grief at her separation from her beloved husband, distracted by his sufferings, overwhelmed by the knowledge of his cruel and derogatory treatment, and broken-hearted that she was neither al-

lowed to alleviate his griefs, nor administer to his sorrows, sank into eternal sleep, and was followed to the silent tomb by her bereaved children. One living mourner less was left, but one deep and deeper calamity more was reserved for us, who had been wont to mingle our sighs and tears with hers. Alas! alas! one other added and unmitigated woe for those who still remained to weep. Years cannot wear away the remembrance of such a trial as this, nor time efface the awful recollection, but she has passed away from her afflictions on this earth, I trust to everlasting happiness."

He paused; then added in a lower tone—

"Her children have no other consolation left them, than to pay these bitter tributes to her memory."

The Prince overpowered by these sad remembrances, wiped away the bitter drops of which he spoke.

"Duke Maurice, my Father and your

Father, the Landgrave of Hesse," he continued with encreasing energy, "pines away his days in hopeless grief and suffering within the narrow limits of a nasty and loathsome prison; he, who at your instigation, consented to degrade himself before a human being,—who consented to yield his territories, power, and liberty, at the feet of one, who before high Heaven, is mortal like himself, upon the pledge that this demeaning and unbecoming ceremony would satisfy the temporal pride of the ruler, whose power had stricken him so low,—who in defiance of the convention that his restoration to freedom and to his territories should wipe out the disgrace of such profound humiliation, is still held in vile durance like the meanest malefactor. Is this the fulfilment of the compact of which Joachim the Elector of Brandenberg and yourself were the agents? Are such empty professions and futile attempts enough to satisfy

the yearnings of his children? and will they efface the odium which must attach to you?"

The Prince now nearly overcome by strong emotion, pressed his hands across his forehead, and paused. The assembly awaited in silence and respect until these filial feelings were somewhat subdued. By a strong effort he calmed himself, and then proceeded with more composure.

"Duke Maurice, I cannot counsel your journey, I doubt your safety with one, who so lightly holds his plighted word and kingly honour; one who in his arrogance, deems that even his prisons should be filled with captive Princes."

"I fear no danger, Prince," replied Maurice "the Emperor knows well my attachment to him, and my personal intercession, if necessary, must not be wanting."

"Be it so Duke, but blame me not if I cite

the Elector Joachim of Brandenberg and yourself to fulfil your obligations."

"Prince," replied Maurice, "I shall persist in *my design*, and I question not that our father's liberation will be the result."

Within a week, Mansfeldt and Prince William passed the gates of Wittemberg; the Prince to seek Duke George, who was in winter quarters at Mulhausen, Mansfeldt to Magdeburg, the bearer of an invitation to Sir Otho and Clotilda, to visit the Elector and Electress at Wittemberg.

Deeply as they felt indebted to Duke Maurice, they could not part from those with whom they had been for so many weeks domesticated, and from whom they had received so much friendship and kindness, without deep and sincere regret. Mansfeldt was almost inclined to rebuke them for their unwillingness to obey this distinguished summons, however flattering

their reluctance might be to the Countess and himself.

“ His Highness,” he observed to Otho, “ besides the few opportunities he has himself had of judging, has heard your acquirements much extolled, nor has Duke George been wanting in availing himself of occasions to laud your military talents. Wild as he is, he has not been unobservant of or lukewarm in your praise, you know he rarely chooses a cold medium in act or speech.”

Otho sighed and observed—

“ You are right Count, it is not for an obscure knight who has a name to gain, to cast away an occasion which may lead to distinction. I owe every exertion to you my own Clotilda, and to that dear one who now nestles in the Countess’s arms.”

“ We shall miss you sadly,” said Mathilda pressing the hand of her friend, “ but I trust while His Highness appreciates your society he will graciously consider how much his

enjoyment robs our domestic circle, for his more intimate knowledge of you, will teach him how to estimate our loss."

"He draws largely on our family ties ; is it not so Mathilda?" demanded her father with a sly smile. Mathilda blushed.

"You do not answer Mathilda, your mother and myself have the most reason to be dissatisfied."

"Why so my father? I am sure I shall equally with yourselves miss these dear companions. My mother, too, how lonely indeed will she feel without that dear child, of whom really I am half inclined to be jealous."

"No Mathilda," retorted the Countess, "that is not spoken with your usual truth," at the same time placing the young Lewis in her daughter's lap, who covered him with caresses."

"His Highness," pursued the Count, "loves to see those around him happy, and

there is a certain youth who at present holds the rank of his aide-de-camp who is moody and melancholy, and whom the court diversions fail to rouse. He takes some interest in the young soldier for my sake, and fancies that the presence and bantering of a fair cousin of his, may chase away his morbid musings. This young lady therefore is included in his invitation, and I shall myself accompany her to the court, and place her for a short time under the Electress's protection, who promises to receive her with kindness. The Countess and myself therefore must be——”

“Left alone,” interrupted Mathilda, “but this must not be.”

“I fear there is no alternative my dear child; you cannot say nay to such a bidding; you must therefore quit the dulness of Magdeburg for the court gaieties of Wittemberg, and assist his Highness to discipline this

wayward recruit, whom he enlisted from our Castle."

"I hope," said Mathilda in alarm, "Henry has not given the Elector cause for displeasure?"

"Faith!" replied her father, "it seems that your cousin, rather than the Duke, is displeased."

To say that Mathilda was not gratified and happy, would be to add twenty years to the eighteen which she marked, but there was a shadow over one part of the bright prospect before her, as there ever is over our gayest anticipations; for although the distance from them was not great, or the absence from her parents likely to be prolonged, it vexed her to leave them thus alone; for the good father Augustine, who could not deny himself the happiness of witnessing that of his dear children as he called them, and had therefore given him-

self a longer repose than usual from his holy labours, was about to leave them.

It was a new occurrence also to Mathilda; she had never before quitted the paternal roof. It was her first parting, and a first parting from a loved home, whether in childhood, manhood, or womanhood, is ever a painful separation: it is a break in the hitherto unbroken links of childhood's associations, and the first adieu we bid to home, even if only for a brief space, and under the happiest auspices, is often more felt than lengthened absences later in life, when the Rubicon has been passed and re-passed.

Mathilda therefore set about her preparations in a more orderly and leisurely manner than she would have done, if her parents as well were to be her companions, and often paused as the rich brocades and velvets were offered for her inspection and choice, with a passing doubt as to the happiness

her visit might bring; a distrust which possibly would have been more strongly confirmed, if the image of her cousin Henry had not continually obtruded itself in the foreground. It was arranged that Krantz and the faithful Ludwig should accompany them.

After many tearful adieux, the party finally commenced their journey; Clotilda, Mathilda, and Lewis, with their damsels, in litters, the rest of the party well mounted. Their progress was slow: as the hour at which they started was near noon, as the days were short, and the season the depth of winter, from the keen blast of which the warm furs in which they were enveloped hardly defended them, they could not compass the distance in less than three days.

They were still a few miles on the third day from the end of their journey, when a party of horsemen overtook them, and surrounded the litters. Mansfeldt had provided a sufficient escort, as much for assistance as

protection, although it was difficult to say when any one was secure, or what lawless band might interrupt the course of travellers. At that time, from the constant intercourse between the two towns, this was perhaps the safest road; still Mansfeldt felt some alarm when he was thus unceremoniously stopped, and pushed up to the leader to demand his object; but his exclamation reassured his companions.

“What is this? I believed you, Duke George, to be at Mulhausen.”

“Recently I was,” he replied; “but as I conclude your way is my way, with your leave we will pay our respects to the Elector in company.”

The Count now ordered the litters to proceed, while the Duke greeted Otho in a cordial manner; then turning to Mansfeldt, demanded—

“What precious deposits, Count, may I ask, occupy those funereal-looking ma-

chines, which you are guarding, like a second St. George, from an obstreperous dragon?"

"Forbear your inquiries I pray, Prince, until I unpack my costly wares at his Highness's court; although I confess that the atmosphere might freeze even a fiery dragon, I think your curiosity will hardly find time to cool or abate in the short space which, from the distance, must intervene between its birth and its gratification."

"At any rate, Count, you are in no haste to allay it; a man is usually desirous of puffing off the wares he takes to market," he said, laughing.

"True," replied Mansfeldt, "when they are for sale—but my goods are already disposed of; they are rare in quality. I am not a free man, Prince, to grant them to a new bidder."

"You may not have made a good market, Count; but perhaps you fear to incur the risk of temptation, if a better should offer."

“ I hope I am above it,” he replied, “ or long experience has been wasted upon me.”

Duke George looked annoyed.

“ I fear there are few who can answer for themselves so boldly, Count.”

Mansfeldt was uneasy, but answered calmly—

“ All can, Prince, who are men of honour, and have high characters at stake. We cannot call it *temptation* to do that which is wise and good ; the word therefore itself carries its warning with it, and it is a sufficient one, when we find it applicable to our desires, to admonish us to avoid it, if we regard self-approbation, or the esteem of others.”

“ Upon my faith, noble Sir, I am tempted to put myself under your tutelage, and learn prudence,—surely you will admit this inclination to be both wise and good.”

The Count shook his head.

“ I fear, Prince, you will take lessons from a harsher teacher—experience.”

“ That is to say, if a long life be granted to me. That market is not such a monopoly as yours : it is open to all purchasers.”

Mansfeldt had not felt some uneasiness without cause. Prince William had accidentally mentioned to the Duke, Maurice’s invitation to the party now on their way to Wittemberg, and he determined to set out towards the city and meet them on the road, not, perhaps, with the definite resolve of intercepting them, but, at any rate, with the intention of making an effort of some sort to possess himself of the object of his wild affections.

He had nothing but disagreeable recollections connected with Magdeburg, and detested it, neither could he have formed any excuse for visiting it, but some hope had sprung up from Henry’s separation from his cousin, especially as the Prince had represented him to be unhappy. Mansfeldt perhaps might be induced to hesitate as to

a match which would not exalt his only child ; but the Count's firm manner had considerably damped any expectations he might have formed, and he pursued his way to the conclusion of his journey, quite at a loss as to the best method of proceeding, and of compassing after his arrival, if possible, his designs. He hid his anxiety by keeping up a bantering conversation with Mansfeldt and Sir Otho, interlarding his discourse with jests and laughter.

## CHAPTER VI.

DUKE GEORGE accompanied the party to the palace, and thus assured himself of that of which before he scarcely doubted, that Mathilda was one of the travellers whom the Count was so carefully guarding. The difference of her ceremonious salutation to himself, when she descended from her litter, compared with the more familiar greeting awarded to her cousin, proved to him that his long journey would probably be a fruitless one; and he now for the first time,

began seriously to reflect what excuse he could urge to the Elector for his sudden appearance at Wittemberg, when he believed him to be with his troops, who were quartered at Mulhausen and in the neighbourhood.

When they had alighted and had entered the palace, he remounted his horse, sought lodgings in the town, and then dispatched a message to Count Heideck to request an interview, who, when he received this summons, shrugged his shoulders, hummed an air, and nodded assent, wondering what new and wild schemes were marching and countermarching, at double-quick time, through the Prince's fertile brain.

“What a pity,” he thought, “that his head-piece does not better guide his gallantry: he will storm a town, rally and sally with skill and bravery beyond most men, but will never make a good general at defence, or possess prudence enough to con-

duct an orderly retreat. By his mode of warfare he sets every acknowledged military rule at defiance, and I fear the Elector will find some difficulty in restoring discipline to the troops under his command, after the licence which he allows and encourages.'

Having indulged in these and similar cogitations, the worthy soldier proceeded to the Prince's lodgings, as indicated to him by his messenger. He was received with a hearty welcome, and warm acknowledgments for his prompt attention to his invitation. He hoped that he should find him equally willing to oblige him upon some other points on which he might have occasion to trouble him, besides those which more immediately pressed.

The Count expressed his readiness to promote his wishes, as far as it was in his power to do so.

"First then, my good Sir, I am at a loss

for quarters for my men ; secondly, I wish you to notify my arrival to the Elector."

" The first request I will attend to forthwith, Prince ; your next commission will be also equally easy, for I imagine his Highness expects you."

" Not exactly," replied the Prince, with hesitation. " I did not announce my intention to the Elector, but I have matters upon which I wish to consult him at his leisure."

" Faith, Duke, if you wait his leisure, your business will speed badly,— for his hours, like a civic banquet board, are overloaded with a variety of meats and dishes prepared by master cooks; and although some are not very palatable, nor easy of digestion, still he must taste of all, and give his opinion upon the merits of each. You may imagine therefore that he is not very willing to increase his establishment in this department, or essay the skill of any new compounder."

"Then I must tempt his appetite with some novelty," replied the Prince, laughing.

"Pardon me," responded Heideck, "if I doubt your power to do so. Any new invention is more likely to produce disgust and nausea, and you must not be disappointed if your cookery should be rejected and sent away untasted."

"Nevertheless I will try my skill," pursued the Duke, "if you will act as my usher. Mansfeldt," he added, contemptuously, "with whom I travelled the last few miles, was so intent upon the comfort and safety of the lady-toys he was bringing to the court, that I would not trouble him, nor indeed, could he have aided me in allotting quarters to my men."

This last sentence gave Heideck an insight into the Prince's intended proceedings; he had not been present when Mansfeldt and his companions arrived at Wittenberg, and at the commencement of this

conversation he had supposed the Prince's appearance at this conjuncture accidental.

"It would seem," continued Duke George, "that while his Highness is surfeited with the more solid viands, he assists his digestion with light confections."

"These dainties," replied Heideck. "he leaves to the Electress to scatter among his courtiers."

"He cannot object, Count, that his soldiers shall participate as well, in the scramble for them."

"Possibly," replied Heideck rather maliciously, "he thinks that they help themselves ad libitum to other booty in other quarters, but doubtless," he added, "while you remain here, you will secure your portion of these sweets composed of smiles and honeyed words."

"I shall claim it," said the Prince drawing himself up.

“Not as a right, Prince, these matters usually pass by favour.”

“And sometimes, Count, by interest, which propitiates the favour sought.”

“To my mind, Duke, that is not the weapon I would choose, or use to win my way to such a banquet of delights. It is better to gain the hearts of the inhabitants by proclamation of gentle usage, than bribe the Governor to yield the city to the invaders.”

“You speak, Count, rather as a politician, than a soldier or a lover. All means are fair to gain possession. I suppose upon this principle it was, that your counsel in part helped to save those feasting burghers of Magdeburg from rendering up their goods.”

“It is notorious that it did, Prince, but had it been otherwise, their Governor was above the temptation of bribery, even” he said with meaning, “if they had not held the lives of some valuable prisoners in their

power, as hostages for clemency. As a soldier and a politician, I am satisfied with my counsel and advice, for the result has justified me for the part I played in that transaction, but we are wandering wide of our position, which is bad generalship. As a lover, I recommend when you desire to invest a fair citadel, to do so by gentler approaches than were used on that occasion.—The toys of which you spoke are easily fractured by rough usage; Count Mansfeldt therefore, cannot be blamed for packing his cargo so carefully. I know,” he added with emphasis, “they are beyond all price to him, and bribery, or interest, would fail to gain possession of them; but it is time your people were lodged, I will look to their comforts, how many bear you company?”

“Fifty troopers, two officers besides my own varlets; with your leave, Count, I will share this duty with you.”

Maurice and the Electress received their

guests with their usual urbanity ; the latter turning to Mansfeldt after the first salutations and presentations were over, congratulated him upon his power to add such lovely guests to their society.

“The Elector has spoken much to me upon the charms of your domestic circle, but your family jewels Count, are even of rarer water than I had supposed, although my Maurice was no niggard in his praise ; one could hardly imagine that the Lady Clotilda had been till lately the denizen of a cloister ; the most polished court could hardly produce so fair a specimen of lovely and unaffected elegance.”

“They tell me your Highness,” replied Mansfeldt, “that there is no one more calculated than the good Lady Abbess of Walsrode, to form the mind and manners of a maiden, besides the Lady Clotilda comes of a race renowned for exterior grace and high principle. In early youth

I knew her parents well, and have seldom looked upon their like; no doubt his Highness has acquainted you with her strange story."

"He has indeed, and I grieve that there should be such a cloud of mystery over her husband's birth, for under other circumstances than those unfortunate ones which attended her marriage, we should have called it a mésalliance."

"No one your Highness, can feel his doubtful origin so keenly as Sir Otho does himself, and to this mortifying reflection is to be ascribed the shade which you may observe over his handsome and naturally animated features; the good father Augustine declares, that while he lives, he will never relax in his efforts to discover his parentage, but I fear they will not be crowned with success; however, it is a hope which keeps Sir Otho from greater despondency, although I think the benefit he would confer and

which the other so ardently covets, is almost a doubtful one, for the shadow which hangs over his origin, seems but the more to stimulate his wife's love for him, and every mark of attention or honour bestowed upon him is received by her with heartfelt gratitude, although his own high qualities imperiously demand such consideration for him, for I hold him as much distinguished above most men as she is nearly matchless among women."

Heideck's entrance now rendered the conversation more general. He took the opportunity of requesting the Elector's attention for a few moments, who was not well pleased to be drawn aside from his fair guests.

"Is this just, Count Heideck," he observed good-humouredly, "thus to abridge my few minutes of relaxation?"

"I am unwilling indeed to disturb your Highness from such an agreeable council,

but I have given my word to lose no time in executing a commission with which I am fraught; its communication I fear may not make amends for even the brief space upon which I am compelled to trespass

“What is it?” said Maurice hastily.

“Duke George has requested me to announce his arrival.”

“What does he come for? no disaster I trust?”

“If I gather his real motive, your Highness, it is to bask in the sunshine which certain bright eyes shed over these saloons; our conversation was not long, but its conclusion induced me to form this supposition, for it tended to that effect; as his arrival was unexpected, he desired me to announce it to your Highness.”

“Foolish boy,” said the Elector, “he must be sent back, this is no theatre for his wild pranks.”

"It will be one for a duel or two possibly," replied the Count coolly.

"Advise him against that," said Maurice seriously, "when say you he came?"

"It appears he joined Count Mansfeldt on the road, and entered the town with him; this junction was as unexpected as unwillingly endured; he states that he has matters on which he wishes to speak with your Highness, but gave me no indication of their substance."

"To-morrow I will see him Count, we will give him some hours to arrange in his own mind the propositions he may have to make, that is, if he will take advantage of the delay to reduce his flighty imagination into some order; he is a brave fellow, I wish he were more temperate, but his actions ever outstrip his judgment, and leave it so far in the distance that it is difficult to guess at what point of the compass one must look for it; let him openly attend the council to-morrow,

but reserve what he has to say for a private audience."

Heideck soon returned to the impatient Prince. After his departure, Maurice crossed over to the Electress, who was still in conversation with Mansfeldt, and looking on her affectionately, said—

"Truly my Agnes, I owe the Count some thanks for smiles which are but too unfrequent dwellers upon your countenance. I trust they are the approving indexes of the favour these fair additions he has so kindly confided to our welcome, will find with you."

"They are indeed, my Maurice, and thanks are due to your eloquence, which prevailed with the Count to allow me the opportunity of expressing how entirely my judgment coincides with yours upon the charms and graces of our fair visitors; my smiles are but the borrowed reflections from yours, which ever give birth to my happiest

thoughts ; when sadness casts its shadows o'er my brow, they rise, because I see yours clouded by care and anxiety ; then melancholy fancies environ my thoughts, and persuade me to apprehend some forthcoming danger to you."

Maurice's eyes intuitively followed the direction of the Electress's at the moment she gave utterance to this gentle speech ; as they wandered to the opposite side of the room where Carlowitz and Schoenberg were engaged in conversation with Sir Otho, and answering to her thoughts he said in a whisper—

" Fear not my love, it is they who are in jeopardy ; they have chosen the path which has been so artfully strewed with gold for them ; the ground on which they tread is unsound, and they will sink while my feet still stand firm upon the rock, but I came to tell you that Count Heideck announces a fresh arrival ; as his air when he entered

wore something of mystery, I feared you might suffer alarm."

The looks of the Electress spoke eloquently her thanks for her husband's consideration, he continued—

"Count Mansfeldt on his journey hither, attracted our erratic and fiery meteor, Duke George, within the vortex of his galaxy, which truly needed no additional luminary to increase its blaze of brilliancy."

"Your Highness," said Mansfeldt, "invests me with an undeserved merit; by accident I conclude Duke George pursued his course at the same time to the fixed star which rules the destiny of Saxony, the Court of Wittemberg."

"Light travels fast and far, Count, and some beam from your wandering and bright constellation doubtless reached, and has drawn him hither; but I question, from what I see, if he will find his heaven here;

it will rather be a mercy to abridge his purgatory."

Konrad, having passed an evening of unalloyed happiness with Thumelda and her father, sought his own chamber. To his surprise a light was burning within, and on entering he found Hendrick with folded arms and extended limbs fast asleep before the dying embers of the stove.

He stood for a time debating as to the cause of this unusual visit, and then giving the trooper a hearty shake of the shoulder, begged him to satisfy his curiosity on this head. Hendrick rising and stretching himself, yawned out—

"I have been watching for you, Herr Wolfenstaff, for two good hours at least."

"Not a wakeful watching," retorted Konrad, "if I judge by the chilliness of the room. I wish my good friend, you had kept sentry over the fire."

“So I did,” he replied shivering, “but while watching you in, the fire went out, for I fell asleep; can you blame me for drowsiness, when you have not even a flagon to keep a man company?”

“And make him still more heavy headed,” responded Konrad ; “but let me ask what stronger motive than good liquor prevailed with you to leave to others the duty of draining the tankards?”

“I took my guard over them early in the evening, trust me I did not let these jolly companions escape me altogether,” answered Hendrick ; “but I came to seek you here because I could not find you elsewhere, and here at last I knew you must come to take your rest, and because I want your advice, which is not a thing a friend often keeps one waiting for, unless his pocket is called upon at the same time to make it acceptable. That creature Bortoni, who is under my

custody, is sick, and I am at a loss how to act."

" You have not starved him I hope ?" said Konrad.

" Oh ! no, he is well nourished, but stall feeding seemingly does not suit his constitution, the prison besides is damp, and I fancy he has been used to treatment as dainty as that of a lady's lap-dog."

" Are you sure Hendrick that he ails ? or has he imposed upon your honesty ? for he is crafty enough to feign death itself if needful."

" So I thought at first," he replied, " and gave him abundance of food and clothing, but did not otherwise heed his complaints. but I believe truly his sickness to be sore and real. I want you to see him, for as you are well skilled in book learning, the Elector will be better satisfied with your report than mine."

Konrad rather winced at this proposition ; the spy was as abhorent to him as a loathsome reptile ; he hated to look upon him, but he felt that the soldier was right, for he well knew that the Duke by no means desired his death, but merely his safe custody ; the creature was but a vile tool in the hands of others, more guilty and corrupt than himself, although too high in power to be made amenable to the Electoral Court for their corruption.

“ Hendrick I am ready, although I would rather again face my fierce and late god-father of the forest by whom I played such an undutiful part, than encounter this snaky creeping thing.”

He then took up the lamp, and was proceeding towards the door.

“ Tut man,” cried his companion, “ not so fast, take your cloak and hat ; you forget that the gentleman’s lodgings are underground.”

"And the walls I suppose," added Konrad, "filter the waters of the Elbe. Poor wretch! he has spied farther into the Elector's stronghold, than it came within his calculation to be able to do; but come Hendrick, I am now proof against your reeking subterranean domicile."

"Sounds of revelry were to be heard issuing from the banqueters as they passed through a lateral and covered passage which ran along the side of the hall, and led into one of smaller dimensions. This vestibule opened into a quadrangle, and faced the outer gate with its capacious porch. One door to the right entered into the guard-room, another to the left into the quadrangle, and one fronting them into another passage similar to that they had just quitted. On each side of this gallery were rooms appropriated to the stores of arms and accoutrements. Some fifty paces brought them into a vaulted and groined roofed chamber, thickly deco-

rated and strewed with coats of mail and their accompaniments. Here Hendrick trimmed his lamp, took a basket (which he had placed there previously to his seeking Konrad) from behind a cuirass, and again quitting the chamber made a short turn, at the termination of which they reached the landing place of a flight of steep stone steps which led downwards to the base of a high tower. This entrance to the dungeons below was guarded by a strong door, which, as well as the one from the chamber above, Hendrick locked after them, and preceding Konrad, he admitted him into a vault which received but a scanty illumination from a loop hole high above their heads. It required some little time even in the broad glare of day for the eye to become accustomed to the darkness of the place, before an archway with a recess on either side and within which was embedded a well-guarded door, could be discovered.

“ Now, Herr Wolffenstein, keep behind me, and judge for yourself, unseen by him, of the state of my prisoner.”

As they entered the dungeon of Bortoni, which occupied about one third of the base of the tower, and received neither light nor air from without, Konrad slid into its darkest corner. The atmosphere was damp, and loaded with that heavy and earthy smell which weighs down vitality, but the prison was otherwise clean and spacious. Under a lamp, which was fastened by an iron cramp and socket to the wall, and which burned but dimly, owing to the dank vapours of the place, was stretched, on a pallet of piled straw, the one-eyed spy.

Hendrick approached a table, and having placed upon it his lamp and basket, called to announce his presence to his captive. A low moan was the only reply he received.

“ Come, get up,” said the trooper, “ I cannot tarry long. Here is your provision,

which in consideration of your sickness, you may flavour from this good flask of rhenish."

Slowly the wretched creature arose from under the sheep-skins with which Hendrick had furnished him, and looked wildly around him.

"Ah! Master Hendrick," he said, in a feeble voice, "thou art ever in haste, and I do not marvel that thou art so, to leave this noisome place."

"No thanks to you and your confounded knavery that I have to visit it so often," replied the trooper. "Many a better man has fared worse—and for his honesty too. Here are dainties enough to tempt a hermit. Come, come;" and Hendrick motioned to him to approach the table.

"One breath of air, or ray of light, would be worth all your dainties," he replied, as with difficulty he tottered forward.

Konrad shuddered as he viewed Bortoni:

his body, lean and diminutive before, was now shrunken and emaciated. It had lost its peculiar pliancy : his sharp features had become sharper, and his complexion cadaverous, while his unshaven beard nearly reached to his sunken chest.

“ I cannot eat, Master Hendrick ; have you spoken a word of favour for me ?”

“ No, I have not,” he replied.

“ Oh ! do not let me die in this dark and lonesome place—I will tell all.”

“ No doubt of it,” answered Hendrick, “ and more than all, and that is the reason you are here. It is a dangerous thing to pry into the secrets of princes. You carried on the trade too long, and have at last set your foot on your own treacherous trap : no doubt it was well baited, as you intended it for others.”

“ No, no, not your master’s secrets indeed : I do not know them—I can tell nothing of them.”

“ If you do not,” said the soldier, “ at least you tried your best to steal them; —but who is to believe you? Why, you would betray Satan himself, your bosom friend, for the value of a thaler: I have told you before, your life is safe.”

“ No, no, it is not — I shall die here alone;” and then suffering his head to sink upon his breast, he continued, in a hollow whisper—“ Bortoni, thou wilt never again breathe the fresh air, see the sun, nor look upon the faces of men. Alone in this dark and fetid sepulchre,”—and again he raised his head, and looked around in terror,—“ here thou wilt sigh thy last sigh.” Then throwing himself upon his knees before Hendrick, cried, in supplicating tones—“ But for one peep of day, for once to inhale the fresh breeze, I would pay gold—all I have, Master Hendrick.”

“ Tempt me not, man,” exclaimed the soldier, “ with bribes: I will have none of

thy coin, which comes from the devil's mint; it would scorch my palms. Thou knowest I dare not let thee beyond yon outer prison; there thou mayest walk while I watch."

"I cannot now bear my useless and wasted limbs so far; I have no breath. Is there no one to show mercy to a dying man? My master—surely he would intreat in my behalf,—and they say your Prince is merciful."

"Rise, Master Bortoni, your master believes you dead, and cares not that you are so. He well deserves to share your prison; for in truth, he who set you on your dirty work, merits as much, or more, to partake the penalty."

"It was a harsh sentence," he rejoined, rising, "to send me hither."

"Milder than you had earned," said Konrad, coming forward, "when you would have shifted your abominable machinations by

base lies upon the shoulders of an innocent man, and accused him of a treason to which you endeavoured to bribe him, and which would have cost him his life."

The wretched being at the sight of Konrad wrung his hands and almost screamed, "if thou art here, there is no hope."

Konrad looked down upon him with a mixture of compassion and contempt.

"Had'st thou been Konrad, and Konrad Bortoni, there would be none for thee, for thou and thy employers love retribution better than mercy, but I have not come hither to reproach thy misery, however well deserved such reproaches."

Konrad now examined more minutely the object before him : a shivering fit had seized him, his teeth chattered, his body waved to and fro, he breathed so short and with so much difficulty, that the clammy perspiration gathered in drops upon his forehead ; Hendrick made him swallow a glass of

wine, and when a little revived, led him to his straw pallet, for the aguish paroxysm made him fear that he was about to die ; he threw the sheep skins over him, and placing the table, with a jug of water by his side, replenished the lamp, and soon after with Konrad quitted the dungeon of the wretched being.

As they crossed the vaulted chamber and entered the passage beyond, Konrad whispered, “ we are watched.”

Hendrick instantly shaded the lamp with his cloak, and they paused.

“ It was the echo of our own steps,” murmured Hendrick in the same low tone.

“ There was a footfall after we stopped,” observed Konrad, “ make six steps forward, and then halt.”

They did so, and no longer doubted that some one was and had been in advance of them from the chamber.

“ I fear me, we must have left the passage

and outer vaulted chamber doors open," murmured Konrad, "let us hasten forward."

As they did so, they caught the glimpse of a figure issuing into the vestibule.

"Hurry onwards," said Konrad, "and see if any one is missing from the table, and I will wait your return in the quadrangle."

Hendrick was not long absent; he reported that all the guests were there, but that as he looked into the hall Schoenberg was apparently reseating himself by Colonel Schwendi, and a cloak which he knew to be his was cast aside as if it had been thrown off in haste.

"Is the Elector there, Hendrick?"

"No, if he has been there he has quitted them,"

The clock now struck ten.

"I must away," said Konrad, "we shall be blamed for leaving those entrances unlocked, but we must excuse ourselves as well as we can to the Elector for our careless-

ness. I will go forward, and endeavour to see him ; indeed it is my hour of attendance for to-morrow's orders ; wait in my room till I come back."

Konrad made all speed to the Elector's closet, and as he passed through the ante-room, demanded of a page in attendance if his Highness had passed through ; he was answered in the affirmative, an hour since.

"Has he enquired for me ?"

"Yes, some minutes ago."

Konrad found the Elector alone, who having given him some trifling directions, said :

"Wolfenstaff, I shall not require your further services to-night."

Konrad requested a few minutes' audience, and narrated the circumstances of his visit to Bortoni's prison, and his precarious state. When he had concluded all the particulars of his relation, the Elector desired him to bring Hendrick, who, although ex-

pecting the summons, entered in some trepidation, anticipating an angry reprimand.

“How long has your prisoner been ill?”  
the Duke demanded.

“For many days, your Highness.”

“Has he endeavoured to bribe you to release him?”

“He has, your Highness.”

“I cannot much blame him for that. Have you reason,” he continued, “to suspect that your visits to his prison have been watched before to-night?”

“Why, your Highness, I have met Herr Schoenberg more than once of an evening in the vestibule, or walking in the quadrangle but as so many come and go that way, I took but little heed of the circumstance, nor perhaps should I have done so at all, if the evening banquet had not been going on at the time in the hall.”

“How often do you visit your prisoner?”

“Twice a day; indeed I have found it needful, for at times he can hardly reach his hand for the pitcher of water beside him, although he is ever crying for fresh water, and takes little else.”

“Is it your custom when you visit his prison, to leave the door of the passage and vaulted room open?”

“No, your Highness, not since he has been in confinement, and I generally make some excuse to accompany any one who has need of access to the stores during the day.”

“It was a careless act of thine, sirrah.”

“It was indeed your Highness, and I am much concerned for the neglect, but in truth I was so anxious to get Herr Wolffenstaff to report the state of the prisoner, and knew that he had not much time to spare for the inspection, that in my haste I omitted to lock them after me.”

“Hum,” said the Elector to himself, “this accounts for his often quitting the table at

so early an hour ; to-morrow evening, Hendrick, your prisoner must be moved ; prepare the upper chamber of the northern tower, and carry him thither ; what money he may have about him deliver to the Chancellor with a note of the sum ; let him have all needful, and in three days report his state to me ; he must not, in case of your absence, have it in his power to bribe his guard, but see that you conduct this removal at the fittest time, and with more caution than you have used to-night. In this service, Wolffenstein, I must request you to assist."

After a few directions, the Duke dismissed them.

"I cannot tell," he thought, "what knowledge the fellow may have gleaned ; he is a well trained spy out of the way, although I do not wish to destroy the wretch, nor deprive his Imperial Majesty of one able friend and coadjutor," and here his counte-

nance expressed ineffable contempt, “out of the phalanx in his pay. The brave Colonel must dispense with his valuable services for some time longer, and continue to take all the dirty duty upon himself; that wretched low spy receives better treatment than my poor unhappy and excellent father-in-law;” and here he heaved a deep sigh, “but that shall not endure.”

## CHAPTER VII.

KRANTZ with reluctance broached to Thumelda the necessity for his speedy departure. His absence from home had been prolonged much beyond his expectation or intention. Thumelda, who had ever before her eyes the vision of the terrible Baron, extracted from him a promise, that he would journey with other travellers after he left Leipsic, where he intended to visit his son Philip. She yearned to see her mother, and would gladly have been the companion of his way, but

but to this the miller would not accede ; his home was no longer the shelter it should be for his child, and sacred as it was to him from every past and fond recollection, his whole thoughts were bent upon abandoning an asylum which during the Baron's life must cease to be either the abode of peace or security.

Clotilda also felt that however his presence at Reiterstein might be beneficial to her interests, yet by urging or even permitting his continued residence in the neighbourhood, (if in her power to dissuade him from it,) she was compromising positively his happiness, and possibly his safety.

To abandon the occupation of the mill had been for some time the subject of his meditations ; most unwillingly was it entertained, and the consideration of it often postponed, but the necessity still glaringly pressed itself upon his attention. The spring would in all probability deprive him of the

protection of the soldiers ; the separation also from his children, his continual absences from them, or if with them, from Theresa, robbed life of all its social charms ; he cared not how much he laboured while his wife and children were near him to reward his toils, and repay his exertions by their endearments and cares for his comforts, but to endure that toil without the recompense of domestic peace, to see possibly the fruits of his industry swept away in one moment, and beggary usurp the place of hard earned competence, was a prospect too dreary to leave him any mental repose. How to compass this removal, was a difficulty not easy to be overcome. His mill was his only resource; it might not prosper under the management of those to whom he could entrust it, as it had done under his own, and he viewed with the most melancholy forebodings his probable ruin, the result of the vicious propensities of one man.

Sir Otho and Clotilda pressed him to trust himself and his family to their care for future provision, and permit them thus to repay in part their obligations to him. His difficulties they urged had arisen from his attachment to them ; it was not just that he should suffer ruin in their cause.

But Krantz replied to them, “That he had only repaid a debt too long due ; all he possessed, all his prosperity, was the work of the loved Lord Lewis and his father, and if he rendered back all to them, he was still their debtor for years of happiness. In his heart he felt besides that honest pride, which although it scorned not a temporary and absolutely necessary aid, could not reconcile him to remain a perpetual pensioner on their bounty, an idle partaker of their generosity, being still in the prime of life, and vigour of body and intellect, and able to amend his fortune by his industry.

Ludwig would not be refused, when he

proposed to bear him company to Leipsic, and quieted Thumelda's apprehensions by the assurance, that doubtless they should find companions on the way, for the first annual fair at Leipsic was at hand. His daughter hung round his neck with many fond adieu, and charged him with reiterated tender remembrances to her beloved mother, with difficulty he tore himself from her affectionate embrace.

While Krantz pursued his journey, matters at Wittemberg did not stand still.

Duke George had urged his suit to Count Mansfeldt, upon which measure he had never ventured openly before ; the Count's denial was gracious, but grave and steady ; still the persevering Prince could not reconcile himself to abandon his hopes. Mathilda trusted that this interview with her father would release her from his further persecutions, for each hour she dreaded some conflict between the rivals, her terror of driving

the Prince to some desperate act, constrained her manner to her cousin when the other was present; the consequence of this prudent conduct was, that Henry became piqued and ultimately jealous at what he conceived her neglect. Thus gradually a coolness grew up between them, unconsciously to themselves almost, and Henry by his increasing causeless suspicions, acted daily in a manner calculated to estrange still more Mathilda's confidence, and convert into reality that reserve, which in the first instance was assumed to prevent feuds: cold ceremony usurped the light-hearted jest, and not unfrequently the former friendly bantering took the tone of sarcasm.

Henry, by degrees, persuaded himself that his cousin preferred the Prince's attentions, when in fact she only tolerated them for the sake of her lover. Mathilda on the contrary, from his indifferent manner, began

to view in his conduct the desire to break from an engagement of which he had become weary. Mutual avoidance was the result of these mistaken impressions; to all others than her lover's eye, Mathilda's discouragement of Duke George was evident, but neither of the rivals looked upon her behaviour in this light.

Henry considered her alteration of manner to himself as the result of her preference for another; the Prince, viewing it according to his sanguine temperament, hoping and wishing it to be so, believed her partial desertion of her cousin's society, evinced a predilection for his own.

Mathilda was miserable, but neither complained, nor sought consolation; her whole endeavour was to school herself into more indifference. Her state of mind was so unhappy, that she counted till the hour should arrive, which would bear her from the scene where she had anticipated so much pleasure,

but where she had found the very source from which she hoped to draw it, poisoned, to that hour which would carry her back to the bosom of a fond mother and friend.

She was so upright in her own intentions, and so open, that she never suspected she could be misunderstood ; nor was she, by those who looked on with unprepossessed minds, but prejudice unfortunately views every occurrence askance, and never takes in more than the profile which comes within its scrutiny. A prejudiced man is as unsafe a counsellor as he is a dangerous judge.

By those who were unbiassed, as there was no cause given by her for the coolness between Henry and herself, therefore was it for some time unperceived. Their estrangement also had been gradual, and had increased by imperceptible degrees ; his dereliction was confirmed in her mind, because his present conduct was so much at variance with his natural disposition. She was sure

that if he had grounds for uneasiness, he would frankly declare his annoyance ; but jealousy, like bodily disease, is of a Proteus character, and perverts the natural temper. On the contrary, when this change of manner first came over him, she endeavoured more than once to draw him into an explanation, but he either turned away, made an indifferent remark, or some slighting observation which sealed her lips ; he recklessly abandoned her to Duke George's assiduities.

The Count, notwithstanding all Mathilda's caution to conceal from him the distress of mind she was enduring (for she knew that any complaint preferred to her father against her cousin would bring down upon him her parent's severest displeasure), perceived the roses fade from her cheek ; he feared that the change from regular and quiet habits to scenes of continual gaiety and festivity had impaired her health ; but whenever she saw the Count's eye upon her, she assumed an

air of enjoyment and cheerfulness, which exertion, as well as the fear that the cause of her pallor should be perceived, brought a transitory glow into her face, and then he thought his anxiety had misled him.

Henry's excuse for his relaxed attention wash is duty in attendance upon the Elector ; his conversation, when near his cousin, was on the delights of the chase, or the anticipated glory of some future and perhaps distant campaign. He seemed to dwell with peculiar complacency upon the discussion of every amusement in which, from its nature, she could not be a partaker, and upon every subject from which she could derive no interest, laughed, and would pass the greater part of the evening by the side of the handsome Adelheid Carlowitz, and look as if he was vexed when called upon to show some act of courtesy to Mathilda.

Mansfeldt was not always present; still he thought his manners not improved since

his residence at the Electoral Court, but never suspected any change towards his beloved child possible. To a whispered observation to her to this effect, she quietly replied—

“ I do not think they are.”

Henry at the moment was standing near, and overheard, as Mansfeldt intended he should, the remark and the rejoinder, and coloured.

The listless way in which she answered, and the unusual paleness of her complexion, drew the Count’s attention, and he continued, looking at her—

“ Nor have your looks benefitted, my child, by new habits, or the dissipation to which you are unaccustomed.”

The Prince at this moment placed himself at her side, and heard her reply—

“ My quiet home, my father, suits me best: I shall regain my former robust appearance when we return to Magdeburg. When, think

you, we shall take our departure? my dear mother must be very lonely."

Neither of her auditors liked this observation, which was intended for both.

"Oh! Count," said the Prince, in a beseeching tone, "do not deprive the court of one of its brightest stars."

"But, Prince, you have just heard my father declare that the star has lost its brilliancy. Such a feeble light will scarcely be prized where so many, more dazzling, shine; and I assure you the star itself will be very glad to travel back in its own orbit, since some convulsion of nature has transferred and greatly misplaced it."

This was said half jestingly.

"But," rejoined the Prince, "the Electress will never part from you so soon?"

"To the kind Electress," said Mathilda, "I must yield my wishes, as I did when I accepted her gracious invitation, and should

be ungrateful if I could leave her without regret."

"And are there none others to share with her in this feeling?" said the Prince.

"Yes, those with whom I quitted Magdeburg, and to whom I must reluctantly bid adieu when I return thither."

Henry caught the last part of this sentence only, and immediately construed it into an invitation to the Duke; and burning with vexation, crossed into another room, and again devoted himself to the fascinating Fraulein Carlowitz.

"Yes," thought Henry, "as he retired that night to his own chamber, "this was the reason why she so readily acquiesced in my aunt's objections to our immediate union. 'When I return thither;' yes, doubtless, he will be a welcome guest at Magdeburg when I am far away." And now he endeavoured to dwell upon the image of the handsome Adelheid and her flattering reception of his

attentions ; but that of his cousin would obtrude itself in the foreground, and notwithstanding the flashing dark eyes, but bolder beauty of the manœuvring lady, his attempt to bring them into juxtaposition was a reproach to himself.

Clotilda, who passed her mornings before the appearance of the Electress chiefly with Mathilda, was not slow to discover that something was amiss with her friend, but as Mathilda's answers to her queries and apprehensions as to the state of her health, were answered cheerfully or were adroitly avoided, she could not press the subject.

The cause, when she perceived Henry's repeated devotion to Adelheid Carlowitz, did not escape her, or raise him in her opinion. She grieved that the first affection of her friend should have been thrown away upon a being so capricious, and devoid of discrimination. She reflected however that Mathilda joined to a gay and happy disposi-

tion, the firmness of character which was conspicuous in both her parents, and blighted as she might be by her cousin's treatment, she felt assured that she would struggle against [its domination over her future happiness, rather than sink under the disappointment of misplaced affections, but Clotilda grieved that the young heart of the amiable Mathilda should be exposed to such an unmerited wound; although religious principle, love for her parents, and moral courage might heal the stab. While she was thus musing, a gentle hand upon her shoulder caused her to turn round, and her husband's eyes met hers.

He seated himself by her, and pressing her to his bosom said :

“As usual, my love, I have come for comfort to my fountain of all joy and consolation.”

“What ails my Otho?” she cried in alarm.

“A vexation,” he replied, “which may pass away. Duke George, whose friendship for me has revived, and burns with more ardour than ever, has proposed to me, to return with him to Mulhausen. I evaded, and declined his proposition with all the adroitness in my power, unwilling to offend him; but as he never conceives that he can have imbibed a false impression, he is persuaded that he offers that which must be acceptable. I urged my unwillingness to be absent from yourself, an unnecessary sacrifice when the army was in winter quarters. Oh! he would persuade you to consent to the temporary separation. A command was ready for me. I told him that it was not in my power to leave Wittenberg. I was here by the Elector’s command. Oh! he would arrange that with the Elector, in fact he had some counter argument for every objection which I urged.”

“But you will not go, my Otho, you will not accept his offer?”

‘ Assuredly not, my love, if I can avoid it; but if he should represent to the Elector that my wishes coincide with his, which I fear he will do, and his Highness commands, I shall be placed in a most unlooked-for position.’

“ Cannot you explain to his Highness ?” demanded Clotilda, in agitation.

“ But if, in the interval, the fiat goes forth, how can I refuse ? for unless the Elector sees good reason, he will not impose an irksome duty upon me; and it is difficult to guess what arguments Duke George may bring forward to induce him to come to such a decision. I know he would be glad if some steady adviser and friend was near him, to check his wild ravages.”

Clotilda saw the truth of her husband’s remark, and sat for some time in silent consternation. She had suffered so much, that

she dreaded any separation from him ; their happiness in each other was perfect, the one painful thought of his birth alone continued to cast a shade of sorrow over Otho's brow.

His conjecture was well founded. Duke George applied to the Elector for permission that Otho should join him.

Maurice was astonished, and demanded if Sir Otho had sanctioned the application.

" Not exactly, but he knew that it was in accordance with his wishes. He certainly had hesitated, but his indecision appeared to proceed from his doubt of his Highness's approval and permission."

Maurice knew how often the Prince's judgment was perverted by his sanguine disposition, and told him he would think upon it.

" Leave his wife, leave the court and my protection, to join an unemployed army, under the command of an impetuous Prince ? If this be his desire, I have greatly misin-

terpreted the knight, or his friendship is of a most romantic character," thought Maurice, as he entered the circle usually assembled in the saloons. His eyes, when he had conducted the Electress to her seat, and placed her under the care of Duke George, wandered over the various groups around. Henry, as usual for the few last evenings, was by the side of Adelheid Carlowitz. "Again?" thought Maurice, as he observed them. Mathilda was conversing with Sir Otho; their looks were grave, while Clotilda's, who sat apart, bespoke anxiety, and were fixed on his own movements. He drew near, and with some gracious remark addressed her. She rose; but taking her hands within his own, he gently re-placed her in her seat, at the same time occupying the vacant one beside her, himself.

"Your knight I perceive," he observed, "is supplying the place of that recreant one, who is basking in the beams of the

handsome Adelheid's smiles ; my aide-de-camp is toying with dangerous weapons."

"I lament his hardihood," replied Clotilda, "at the same time that I deprecate his taste."

"She is handsome, very handsome," said the Elector, "what say you, fair lady, in comparison with the beauty of your friend?"

"I am not at a loss to answer your Highness's question, since happily for Mathilda of Mansfeldt, there is so much disparity that a comparison can hardly be drawn between them."

"But," he urged, "you see she has the greater power of fascination."

"Too much of that your Highness! art has superseded the rights of nature."

"Doubtless," replied Maurice, more seriously, "in the present instance, for your fair friend, if I do not greatly err, bears nature's best impress in her character."

"She does indeed," cried Clotilda with enthusiasm, "and the reverse of the beautiful medal which hitherto Henry has worn next his heart, is engraven with principle."

"If you had dissented from my opinion," returned Maurice, "yon gallant Prince of Mecklenberg would doubtless have enlisted on my side with as much eagerness as he seems to covet the favour of the fair object of our discussion. The Electress appears to have dismissed and released him, for more rational converse with Count Mansfeldt. I fear his halcyon days are nearly over; he has stolen a march on his own troops, and I am inclined to think will fall back upon his reserved forces in some disorder, unless he can entice some friendly aid from my garrison to accompany him in his retreat, and console him after his defeat."

"He will not readily find any one willing

to make such an exchange," replied Clotilda.

"He assures me otherwise," observed Maurice.

"He vouches hastily perhaps," replied Clotilda, "for that which is his own single desire. His success I imagine to be more than problematical, unless your Highness commands, which command, although it may be lamented, cannot be disputed."

"You speak so confidently, my fair ward that I suspect you are not ignorant of his designs in this matter."

"In truth I must confess, your Highness, that I am not. He has made the same proposition to Sir Otho, and gave him much concern in pressing it and persisting in it."

"We will undeceive the well-meaning mar-plot," said Maurice good-humouredly, "and your knight shall occupy a post more to his taste;" at the same time quitting his seat, and looking towards Sir Otho, to in-

dicate to him that it was now vacant for him.

Maurice during the evening made known to the Prince, that he required Sir Otho's services at Wittemberg, but that if he found it requisite, he would send him to join him.

In proportion as Henry cooled towards Mathilda, so did the Prince's spirits and ardour increase, and she could with difficulty bear up under the daily tortures she was compelled to suffer.

She loved her cousin truly and tenderly, loved him for his frank and noble disposition, for his attachment to her father, for his entire unselfishness, and generous nature. The inexplicable change in his temper and manners, grieved her to the heart, if possible, more than his waywardness to herself. He was entangling himself in a fatal net, for although his attentions to Adelheid Carlowitz were confined to their occasional meetings in society, and were more openly dis-

played when she was near to witness them, they would, if continued, compromise him with her father, nor was the young lady a person to suffer him to withdraw them at his own pleasure. Mathilda had never liked her, and had negative every effort on her part at intimacy; the fair Adelheid therefore had a greater satisfaction in withdrawing Henry's attention from his cousin, more particularly as on his first arrival, her blandishments had been lost upon him. Mathilda now avoided her more than ever, although she appeared to take an unblushing delight in parading her fascinations before the unhappy maiden. She would gladly have drawn the Prince as well into her toils, but as more than one object at the same time never occupied his mind, for however short a period the present fancy might endure, she found this division of her artillery might endanger her ultimate victory over her intended victim; for she

was far too keen sighted not to perceive, that while Henry's attentions were often too glaringly displayed to her, his heart was not in them, and that he was not so far entangled in her wiles, as to be tormented by any jealous feeling, but that coquetry on her part might disgust him at her levity; his bosom must be bland from one affection, before another could be planted; for this reason she was ever on the watch to speak in praise of the Prince, extol his valour, at the same time hinting that although he excited her admiration, he was not to her taste calculated to excite any other feeling.

By artful manœuvres, she generally placed herself in such a position, that every word spoken by him to Mathilda might be noticed by Henry. Indefensible and ill-judged as Henry's proceedings were, his heart was still true to his cousin, and if the fair Adelheid had known better the deep attachment and intimacy which had almost

from infancy subsisted between them, Henry's constancy of heart, or Mathilda's immeasurable superiority over herself in all things, as well as in beauty, her vanity and enterprize might have received a check. She was an admirable adept to deal with worldlings, could finesse against finesse, invent and circumvent, but a character of simple truth puzzled her understanding, because she mistook truth for falsehood, and invested the most simple acts with attributes of art which did not belong to them ; Mathilda, therefore she truly said, she could not comprehend ; as little could the guileless Mathilda comprehend her. If his cousin had believed that jealousy had caused Henry's desertion of her, she would have taxed him with his unreasonable folly, but there was no ground for it. He knew how steadily she had discouraged the Duke, and her pride revolted from the possibility of offering an explanation which might be em-

barrassing to him, and mortifying to herself, if a decay of affection towards her had caused his vacillating behaviour. At times he would fix his eyes on her with a look of distraction, but when he talked to her, it was with an air of indifference. The same silence was preserved by him. “ Of what avail is it,” he would say, as he wildly paced his own chamber, “ to speak to her ? if her love has changed its object, any attempt of mine to endeavour to fan anew the flame, would be useless, as well as ridiculous. Is he not for ever hovering near her ? did she not from the time of his arrival treat me with more reserve ? Luckless was the hour, Henry of Mansfeldt, in which you passed the gates of Wittemberg, or trod its festive halls ! Luckless the hour, Otho, when your sword did not complete its work !”

An order from the Elector, requiring his immediate attendance, arrested this melancholy soliloquy, and other thoughts for a

time were suggested by the result of the summons he had received.

The Elector was in conversation with Count Heideck when he entered, but turning round to him from the window at which he was standing, said gravely : “ I believe, Count Henry, your ambition is to become an accomplished soldier ? ”

“ It is so, your Highness.”

“ Believing this,” said Maurice, “ as your present mode of life here does not tend to this end, I have decided, of course with the approbation of your uncle, that you shall in the course of a few days accompany Count Heideck to Leipsic, where he will explain to you the nature of the duties you will have to perform, and for a time you will also enjoy the advantage of his advice ; by this alone you will act, and under better auspices I could not place you. I trust the time will suffice for such preparations as you may have to make ; a soldier, you know,

should always be ready. Sir Otho will fill your post as my aide-de-camp."

Henry in his present state of mind, cared not where he went, and joyfully acceded to the orders he had received. As he quitted the room, "alas! Poor Henry," he thought, "the sight of thee even, is no longer endurable! Farewell Mathilda, there is nothing now to do but to pray for war—and the first friendly ball; the sooner, the more honoured will be the gift! My uncle too, to counsel thus . . . but what matters it, he is wise to thrust aside the impediment that lies in my cousin's path." As he bent his steps to give orders for the commencement of his preparations for departure, in his reckless despair, he caroll'd a gay air. When he had closed the door, the Elector observed, "upon my word Heideck, I am sorry to part from that boy, but the handsome Adelheid has sealed his fate, thanks as well to his own folly; my aide-de-camp must never be the accepted

lover of the traitorous minister's daughter, who is as wily and plotting as himself, and fancies that her naïve manner shelters her from the observation of the deceived Elector. A little discipline will sober your pupil Heideck."

"Unaccountable!" replied the Count, "but there is evidently no reluctance on his part to quit the dark-eyed enchantress. I begin verily to believe that the boy is jealous of Duke George; I feared some mischief would arise when he appeared so unexpectedly among us."

"He shall not either," replied Maurice, "remain many hours after your departure. As you are in his confidence, a hint from you that his disorderly troops require some restraint from their commander, might save me from the charge of inhospitality."

"I fear that the mission which your Highness has given me is a little beyond my powers of diplomacy."

“Try my good friend.” said Maurice, placing his hand on Heideck’s shoulder; “if your communication to him brings an appeal to me, I will endeavour to decide the question.”

Count Mansfeldt lost no time in informing Mathilda of Henry’s destination.

She did not lament his departure; he would be saved from the snares of an artful coquette, who was quite unworthy of him. His presence no longer contributed to her happiness; on the contrary, she felt indeed that the continual agitation she suffered was daily and sadly undermining her health. For herself she cared not, but she reflected on her parents, childless, if she should be taken from them, she imagined their desolation and grief, and her own decay was a prospect of affliction for them which she dared not look upon!

Heideck performed his mission, but as he had foretold, Duke George in all haste

sought the Elector, who told him he regretted the exigency, but so many complaints had reached him of the disorders committed by his army, that he must, contrary to his own wishes, suggest the expediency indeed the necessity of his repressing them in person.

The Prince came fraught with the purpose of declaring that the object of his stay at Wittemberg was to solicit the hand of Count Mansfeldt's daughter, but there was such an evident avoidance on the part of the Elector when he endeavoured to touch upon the point, giving him to understand that every object was light in comparison to the duties of the command which he had taken upon himself, that he was compelled reluctantly to postpone, though not to abandon, his project. Finding the Elector thus averse to discuss any other subject, he took his leave, trusting to a more favorable opportunity to interest Maurice in the

success of his suit, and hoping ultimately to extract some sanction from the object of it. He felt he could not at present prolong his stay, when motives so openly expressed, rendered him an unwelcome guest. A fête at the palace at the date of three days, to be given more especially in compliment to himself, allowed him however some respite, and soothed him as Maurice intended it should, for his unpalatable request.

## CHAPTER VIII.

“A LETTER for you, mistress Thumelda,” said Ludwig, as he arrested the steps of the maiden, who was threading her way through a concourse of lacqueys, carpenters, and assistant workmen, all busy hurrying to and fro, preparing the decorations of the rooms for the fête which was to take place on the ensuing day.

“Oh! you are come back, master Ludwig,” she exclaimed in pleased surprise

“When did you return? where, and how did you leave my father? how does my dear mother look? how fares all at the mill?”

“Am I to answer your questions by battalion, or rank and file, mistress Thumelda?” inquired Ludwig.

Thumelda impatiently tore open her letter, then closed it with an air of disappointment.

“My father only says—they are well, and refers me to you for all particulars, so you had better begin at the beginning, and forestall all my questions.”

“That would be difficult now,” replied Ludwig laughing, “for according to your marshalling, I must begin my story at the end.”

“First then. I arrived here five minutes since; secondly, we reached Leipsic on the next day after we quitted you, tarried two with your brother, and judging that many were coming into, and few leaving the

town, I would not suffer your father to make his way alone, so we pursued our journey cautiously together; fortunately when within a couple of leagues of Kemnitz, we were taken prisoners by the town guard; and were escorted by our sapient captors safely within the gates, and carried before the magistrates."

"Taken prisoners!" exclaimed Thumelda.

"Ay truly, Mistress," answered Ludwig merrily. "It seems that two days before, and during the carousing at the annual entertainment given by the burghermasters, while most of the citizens were drunk, and the rest more than mid-way on the road to intoxication, a band of plunderers were admitted by some confederates within the walls, who beat off the guard from the gates, helped themselves to all the silver vessels which had been brought forth to grace the feast, emptied the coffers at the private dwellings of some of the revellers, and be-

fore the rolling wine skins could hiccup out orders for pursuit, got clear off with their booty. They would have seized a waggon belonging to the Baron which was standing laden with sundry light goods in the yard of mine host of the porcupine, but the nobles' people beat them off ; my belief is, that this was a feint, and that the waggon dropped some of these robbers on the previous day as it came through the town. The guard looked very foolish when they found they had caught the honest miller; they agreed to make amends for their mistake, (which we had certainly favoured,) by accompanying us to the mill ; there we found your good mother, who was well, and pleased you may be sure to see us. Your father has determined to leave the mill under Schultz's direction, to Carl and Gantz, and remove for a time to Leipsic, while the Baron remains at Reiterstein, for they say his life will not be safe after the departure of

the soldiers ; therefore when they are ordered away, your parents and my father will journey with them. This is my story, mistress Thumelda, and now may I ask in turn what means all this bustle and hurry scurry, as if the place were about to be besieged?"

"Oh ! Master Ludwig, we are to have such gay doings ; a grand ball to-morrow, a great banquet, fire works, and I know not what besides. The workmen are hanging the golden cloths, and the velvet, and silken tapestries embroidered with the Elector's arms, and the scriptural tapestries, fixing the sconces for the lights, erecting the platforms for the fire-works, preparing the banquet tables, and the gallery for the musicians. They say that nothing has been seen so fine since the celebration of the marriage of Prince Augustus, the Elector's brother, at Torgau, when there was a grand castle built on the Elbe, and a sham fight between men dressed in red as Turks, and

our Saxons, and a storming of the castle, and the Saxons beat the Turks, you may be sure ; then they had bonfires, and fire works, and all sorts of beautiful pageants, shows, and diversions ; no one knows so well how to order all these things as our brave Elector, but I must not tarry longer ; thank you very much for your care of my dear Father, and your news, “and away tripped Thummelda to finish embroidering a silver badge for Konrad’s new cap, and trim the same with a broad band of dark sable.

At the earliest point of time on the ensuing evening mentioned in the invitations, the guests began to arrive. The courts were lined with men at arms, the corridors and passages with halberdiers, the ante-rooms with lacqueys, who all, as well as the pages in attendance to usher them into the presence of the Elector and Electress, were superbly arrayed.

Nobles, knights, and ladies, to meet the

magnificent taste of Maurice, were emulous to rival each other in the gorgeousness of their attire. Rich furs, velvets, brocades of gold and silver, with precious gems, were mingled in costly profusion, and the Court of Wittemberg, though not Imperial, rivalled its Germanic superior in splendour.

Before the reception began, those visitors residing in the Castle were ranged in a circle on either side their princely hosts. This ceremony over, the Elector and Electress left their chairs of state; sweet wines, cakes and comfits were handed, till guns gave signal that the fire-works were about to commence. Shouts issued from the gratified populace as each rocket, between the intervals of more complicated efforts of art, shot high above the town, and burst in a shower of descending stars; a Castle erected on the frozen waters of the Elbe suddenly sent forth more than a hundred of these splendid messengers to the clouds, and

then itself exploded in one general firework. The effect was so dazzling, that for some moments the illuminated rooms appeared to be caverns of darkness.

Maurice had bribed from Italy the admirable band, which now broke up the youthful groups. Music, like other arts in Germany, at that period, was not a national, but a very scantily diffused one, and foreigners were either called upon for such entertainments as the occasion arose, or permanently retained by those princes, whose domestic taste or magnificent style of living, demanded similar accompaniments to their state.

To look upon this gay and spirit-stirring scene, who would have said that the light golden tissue barely concealed the throbbing of a pained heart? that the brow encircled with the gemmed coronet and jewelled cap, hid deep and inward thoughts of care and scheming? or that the soft and graceful movements usurped for the brief hour only the stern

and angry gestures of passion ? Characters, like the persons of their owners, are often tricked out for the passing hours in silken thoughts which move to “ Lydian measures.”

How difficult the task to Mathilda to answer with a smile when a tear would have responded more truly to her feelings. How forced were Henry’s movements, who would more willingly have encountered a fierce unyielding enemy to relieve the passion which was consuming him. How mortified the high-minded Otho when he looked around, and felt that his birth-right gave him no legitimate claim of place among the many around of less personal pretension. His valour alone had won him knighthood ; by the proud nobles in that circle, envious of his superior qualifications, he was looked upon with civil scorn, they revenged their own ignorance and rude manners on his obscure position.

The trumpets sounded to another scene of transient splendour. Three tables (provided with game, huge turkeys, pasties of venison, and hares, interspersed with cakes and “gilded show-dishes,”) sufficed to accommodate the courtly multitude. Prince George, Count Mansfeldt and his daughter, with those of princely lineage, occupied the upper table with their Highnesses; the higher nobility the second, while the inferior nobles and knights filled the third. To each guest a servitor was appointed; behind the Elector, on elaborately carved buffets was displayed a goodly array of gold and silver plate. It was a sparkling scene, and not marred as such festivities usually were in those days by the direful habit of hard drinking. The young nobles were merely inspirited for a renewal of the ball, as the known wish of the Electress forbade on these occasions deep potations, and Maurice, though not always abstemious,

as indeed none were, had too much love and respect for his gentle wife, not to second her wishes by his example of self-denial.

Mathilda had studiously avoided the Prince, who had sought every opportunity during the evening to engage her attention; he now requested to escort her from the banquet table, and engaged her hand on the recommencement of the dance. There was no retreat, but Mathilda, who was weary, soon requested to rest, and joining her father, adjourned with him into a smaller room more apart from the sounds of music, and the glare of lights.

“Thou art fatigued, my child,” he said, “but this revel will not last much longer: when the Electress retires, I would advise you to seek your couch.”

“I should be most glad to do so,” replied his daughter, “for pleasure is a penance when it brings such weariness.”

Mansfeldt shook his head; for he knew

the weariness of which she complained was rather in the disappointed heart than in the limbs ; but at such a time he would not trench upon a painful subject, and rather endeavoured to amuse her by giving her the brief histories of some of the more prominent persons with whom he had conversed during the evening. The music ceased for a few moments, and Mansfeldt proposed to ascertain whether the Elector and Electress had retired ; besides, he must seek speech with Henry before his departure to-morrow.

“ Doubtless,” replied Mathilda, with some asperity, “ you will find him, if you enquire for the Fraulien Carlowitz : her dress is of scarlet and gold tissue.”

Mansfeldt looked grieved, but passed on without reply into the other rooms upon his mission.

Mathilda sighed, and placed her hand over her aching eyes. This seemed a relief

to her ; for her melancholy thoughts, with the exertion necessary to hide them, created bodily fatigue. This indulgence was not long enjoyed ; for the Prince, who had watched their retreat and Mansfeldt's return into the ball room alone, was soon at her side, and in imploring accents intreated her to hear and allow him to carry hope into what he termed, when absent from her, his exile.

She did not interrupt his eloquence, for she was pained for him. His faults, in her estimation, and according to her gentle breeding, were heavy ; but she must believe his love to be sincere, if she judged by his perseverance.

Her patience in listening encouraged his hopes. When she found that he was building castles upon her considerate forbearance, it became an act of duty and justice to undeceive him. She lamented his adherence to an unrequited passion, and in-

treated him not to urge a subject upon which she had before so explicitly declared herself.

"It was true," he replied, "she had done so; but, under other circumstances, she could no longer plead her engagement to her cousin, whom the world said, from some cause, had transferred his allegiance, and had voluntarily sought employment, which would keep him at some distance from her.

"Of my cousin's views and feelings," said Mathilda piqued, "I grieve to say I know little, or the cause of his apparent estrangement from us, of which, since I do not complain, none have a right to judge. On two points, Prince, you are misinformed. Henry did not ask, although he accepted more distant service, nor is his heart, I am sure, in the attentions he chooses, for reasons unknown to me, to lavish on another. My father has not dissolved our engagement, nor have I."

"Surely, surely, fair Mathilda, you have not allowed me to indulge in expectations you now mean to discourage?"

"If you have done so, Prince, it is not my fault. I am not aware that I have given you reason to suppose me so mutable: if my manner has been less distant than possibly you thought it formerly, it was altered from the conviction that you had rationally abandoned a pursuit which you found could never respond to your wishes, and also with the desire, by a friendly bearing to you, to avoid the repetition of the strife I once witnessed."

The Prince was deeply mortified; not one encouraging look could he gather from Mathilda's mournful eyes.

"Then you still love your cousin?" he demanded, with an abrupt and desperate effort.

"I know not, Prince, that you have any

title to probe my heart, or put such a question to a maiden, whose attractions you have just informed her have been supplanted by another; but I will sacrifice all punctilio and present feelings to spare yours in future. A woman's heart, once attached, is not prone to change its object, unsuitable as her preference may prove to have been: were mine otherwise constituted, you would secure a very worthless plaything, and I would wish you to value my friendship, though I cannot grant you more,—nor will I lead you to hope I ever can."

" Fair Lady, you are candid," said the Prince bitterly, setting his teeth firmly and striking his forehead, " and cruel as candid ;" and he rushed from the room.

Mathilda was determined to seek her own chamber, and plead indisposition for her untimely retreat, should her absence be observed; but when she rose to pass through the side door, which was near the sofa on

which she had been sitting, Henry, like a statue, was leaning in the door-way. He was entering to pass through this antechamber to the ball-room, when his steps were arrested by the Prince's allusion to him: he remained riveted to the spot from agitation and astonishment.

Mathilda was as much mortified as her rejected lover had been; for though she chose to discourage him by professing her disbelief in Henry's attachment to the manœuvring Adelheid, his faithlessness she did not doubt, and certainly had no desire that he should learn the true state of her heart, or that it was still in his power to reject her.

Under these feelings, coldly, and somewhat haughtily, she requested him to allow her to pass.

Henry started, and seized her hand to detain her; but his uncle at that moment entered, and taking Mathilda's arm within his own, led her away.

“ Their Highnesses are leaving us,” he observed ; “ show yourself, and then I will conduct you to your chamber.”

With a beating heart, Henry awaited in the morning an answer to the permission he had requested, to bid his cousin adieu. Although he could not exculpate himself, he trusted to her no longer doubted love for pardon.

A formal denial came ; she wished him all honour and happiness, but excused herself, from fatigue and indisposition.

What a formidable barrier, he reflected, had his jealousy raised between his cousin and himself. But a few weeks since, such a request would have been as superfluous as a refusal to grant it impossible. In less than twenty-four hours he should be far away : he left none to plead for him ; even his fond uncle evidently looked displeased with him. Mathilda was indifferent to him, the Elector had dismissed him. He had ob-

served Sir Otho and the Lady Clotilda's disapproving looks.

Without purpose, he wandered towards the state apartments. He threw himself into the seat his cousin had occupied on the previous evening. Although winter's rigorous hand kept all nature dormant, and the aspect of the sandy level round Wittemberg presented not its usual contrast to the more favoured and verdant spots beyond, the sun shone brightly and cheerfully through the narrow windows. Whether Henry sought this spot to indulge in solitude, more vividly to recal Mathilda's words and image, to soothe his agitation by visiting the place where he had last seen her, or to mature some idea wherewith to mitigate her anger, perhaps he was hardly himself conscious; but there he lingered, as if his wishes would spirit her back again. The dazzling sunbeams glanced on a glittering object by his side. He took it up; it was a jewel which

had fallen from its setting, and was of value.

At this moment Mathilda's youthful attendant, Hedwig, entered the room; but perceiving Henry, she was about to retreat, when he detained and questioned her closely as to her Mistress's indisposition.

The girl hesitated. Truly the Lady Mathilda was not over well; but had risen, left her chamber, and had desired her not to tarry. She hoped he would excuse her, and let her do her errand.

"And what may that be, Mistress Hedwig?" demanded Henry, who was willing to gather more of Mathilda's real state.

"Why, no harm, I believe, to tell. On replacing my lady's jewels in the casket, we miss an emerald. I have searched every nook and corner of the ball and banqueting rooms, and now my mistress remembers that just before she retired last night,

she was seated for some while in this chamber.”

Hedwig began a diligent search, while Henry plied her with questions.

“ Not here, not here, or here,” she repeated, as each cumbrous piece of furniture was either removed or looked under; and she was quitting the room, vexed at her want of success, when Henry followed her.

The girl stopped and coloured, for they were near the door of Mathilda’s sitting-room.

“ Well, Hedwig, what do you wait for?”

The embarrassed girl, who knew, from the strict orders she had received, that no one but the Lady Clotilda was to be admitted, answered in trepidation:—

“ Please, Sir, my Lady is not well, and will not see any one.”

“ Not if they bring her news of the lost jewel?” At the same time holding the emerald, beyond her reach, up to the light.

"Oh! dear me, how glad I am; pray give it to me."

"Not I," said Henry; "I will restore it myself."

"Oh, no; indeed, you must not, Count; pray let me have it."

"Then, my pretty maiden, I shall keep it, and wear it in my cap," continued he.

"Surely you will not do such a thing?"

"Faith! but I will," he replied.

He looked so resolute, that the poor damsel was puzzled whether her mistress would be more offended by her abandoning the jewel, or disobeying her orders. Making her mistress's case her own, she judged the jewel of more worth than the order, and proceeded after another urgent intreaty to open the door.

She was closely followed by Henry, and stood in confusion, stammering out an excuse for her disobedience, while he felt every

inclination to cast himself at his cousin's feet, and implore forgiveness ; but she looked so proudly on him, they had been so much estranged, their confidence so broken, that he felt he was intruding where he had been forbidden to enter, and dared not presume at once to throw himself upon an indulgence he had forfeited.

Mathilda rose, and requested to know what urgent business had induced him to seek her after her refusal to admit him, at the same time motioning Hedwig to withdraw.

Henry advanced timidly.

" Several reasons," he said, falteringly, " fair cousin, have induced me to transgress your wishes. First, to restore this jewel; next to excuse my errors, proclaim my penitence, and solicit your pardon."

" The jewel, Count Henry, my maiden might as well have brought. I have not accused you to any one; your errors I may

lament, but your penitence I do not require, and therefore you need not my pardon."

Mathilda's disdain struck him to the heart.

" Of one thing I do accuse you," she continued, " and that the last offence of which I believed you capable, or which I can forgive—listening to a conversation which was not intended to be overheard."

This allusion wounded Henry's generous soul to the quick; he defended himself by relating that his presence was accidental. Miserable, and unfit for the gaiety of a scene which nauseated rather than gratified him, he had sought the retreat of a room which no one seemed to occupy, and was, he confessed, unable to move, when he heard her reject the suit of his believed favoured rival. As he proceeded, he became more and more impassioned, stated the grounds of his jealousy, and the wretched state of mind he had endured. In desperation he had gladly acceded to the Elec-

tor's offer. Mathilda did not doubt his truth, but condemned his impetuosity and want of judgment, which lowered him in her estimation. She frankly told him so ; and when with all the energy of his nature and true passion of his heart, he entreated her reception of him upon their former footing, she told him she could not trust her happiness in the power of one who had so little confidence in her, and so little discretion in his conduct before others.

“ You have lowered yourself even in the estimation of your friends,” she pursued. “ Your dismissal from the court, for I can call it little else, is the proof.”

“ And will you discard me because others may condemn ?” he demanded in sorrow.

“ No,” she replied, “ I should not, if I did not find such condemnation just. Like a wayward child, you endeavoured to trample upon your toy, and must not murmur that it is withheld from you; when wholly in

your possession, who can answer for its preservation from injury?"

Henry cast down his eyes. How had his conduct taught his cousin coldly to reason ! How sobered by the reflections he had forced upon her, was the cheerful confiding love she once felt for him ! Could such love ever return ? In his own he felt no decay ; but he had not been misjudged, mistrusted, or made by studied arts of indifference to feel that he was slighted. In agony he paced the room, accused, condemned, and endeavoured by turns to exculpate himself to her.

"Oh, Mathilda, in pity gain me, through my uncle, but the respite of a few days. Send me not from you thus discarded and heart-broken."

"I cannot, Henry, ask my father to demand a favour from the Elector, which will subject him to the suspicion of vacillation, or his daughter to be reported as the

love-sick maiden, whom her recreant lover has deigned again to restore to his favour. You never offered any explanation of the slights you put upon me in public; the stain must be obliterated, before I suffer a renewal of vows you have so faithlessly broken; farewell;" and Mathilda, unequal to further exertion, shaken by Henry's distress, and the pleadings of her own heart, withdrew from the room.

He stood where she had left him, dizzy with the anguish he was suffering. How differently from his expectations had this interview terminated; how subdued his own bounding spirit. In what anticipation could he indulge for the future: he felt the wreck of all his young hopes; how unskilful a mariner had he proved for his own happiness. All, all his prospects had perished on the unfriendly shore to which he had steered them. The love of the woman he adored, her

peace of mind, and the friendship of those he loved.

“ Oh, fool and idiot that I have been !”

Despairingly he sought his uncle, to throw himself upon his affection and his mercy.

Here less comfort was held out to him ; he must consider his engagement with his cousin as broken, and this it had been his purpose to tell him, if he had not sought him ; an intercourse must now cease from which he had so perseveringly withdrawn himself ; he would not endanger his child’s happiness by entrusting it to one who proved himself so unstable.

Thus dismissed in shame and confusion, but full of wise resolves for the future, Henry joined Heideck, and quitted Wittemberg with him on the following morning.

Henry’s departure preceded that of Duke George by a few hours only, and the deserted Adelheid was compelled to transfer her

smiles to the French Ambassadors. The desired lover had broken from her toils without one expressed regret, or even a request to be permitted to say adieu. The night of the ball had terminated their intercourse. Her vanity was wounded, her blandishments had been thrown away, and her arts lost upon a person whom, from his guileless character she conceived would have fallen an easy victim to her wiles. Her manœuvring had been defeated by inexperience, and her insidious darts of wit rendered pointless, because their aim was unsuspected. The more she was out of humour at her own failure, the greater acrimony did she feel against the cause of her discomfiture, whom she always addressed with that air of compassion which implied patronizing pity. Mathilda was not provoked by her malice, because she had no esteem for her character, and charitably reflected that although she had brought her mortification upon her-

self, she was not the less mortified ; at the same time she took the privilege of avoiding her impertinence.

This conduct in her rival the other attributed to timidity, and believing she had the power to annoy her, she sought occasion the more to do so. Clotilda, who knew that Mathilda had been sorely tried and needed repose, generally contrived to take a place near her friend, when she saw that the young lady meditated one of her pretended friendly enquiries, for she appeared to be the only person of whom she stood in some awe ; but self - confidence, spurred on by envy, is not easily daunted. Without hesitation, therefore, a few evenings after Henry's and the Duke's departure, she advanced to join a coterie, who were conversing sociably apart from the rest, and addressing Mathilda, expressed her pleasure that she was well enough and in spirits to join the circle.

Mathilda bowed, and said she was extremely flattered by her continued concern for her health, but lamented that as it had experienced little variation except from occasional lassitude arising from late hours and fatigue, she must rob her of the gratification which she was sure she felt, at its amendment, and which she so elegantly expressed.

“I am sorry,” persisted Adelheid, “that my enquiries are ill-timed, but heavy eyes and faded roses misled my judgment.”

“That which is well meant,” answered Mathilda quietly, “is rarely ill-timed; that which is otherwise intended, must ever be so.”

Colonel Schwendi, who really liked Mathilda, and had been treated more than once by the **Fraulein Carlowitz** with hauteur and caprice, observed :—

“Surely you do not expect roses to bloom at this season, fair lady.”

“Oh, but the fair Mathilda brought such a profusion from Magdeburg, that one could hardly suppose she would so soon be robbed of them at Wittemberg.”

“Perhaps you are the thief,” said Mathilda laughing, “and have stolen them to use as blushes.”

Schwendi looked approval.

“If so, I must request your instruction in the art to manage them,” retorted Adelheid.

“That I cannot vouch to do,” replied Mathilda, “I confess I have often found them inconvenient, perhaps they are weary of my want of skill, and will be content to remain in abler hands. I must leave them therefore to your discretion, that you may employ them as time and purpose suit; I am heartily glad to be rid of the tell-tales.”

This was said so archly, that for a time the invader was foiled, but soon returned to the attack.

“ You also, Colonel, I fear, intend to leave some damsel to sigh for your absence.”

“ Unless you take compassion upon me, fair lady, I fear there will be few sighs accorded to waft me on my journey.”

“ They will be few indeed, and cold ones, if you depend upon me for a supply. If you felt that you required such an impetus, you should have been more alert, and have taken advantage of the escort of those who have preceded you.”

“ I was not aware,” replied the Colonel with a mock air of concern, “ that I was making my application to one whose previous generosity had reduced her to bankruptcy.”

Mathilda with difficulty repressed a laugh, but said with much gravity, “ Although you have not proffered your request to me, I really should be most happy, Colonel Schwendi, but must hoard mine for the day which is

not far distant, when I shall bid adieu to many kind friends in Wittemberg."

"I suppose then, fair ladies, I must make friends with fate, and resign myself to a north-easterly wind, a softer breeze would have been (at least in imagination) more genial :" turning to Mathilda, "any commands for Inspruck ?"

"None, thank you," she replied. "My father himself talks of travelling southward early in the spring ; my mother wishes much to revisit Italy."

"Indeed !" observed Schwendi.

The unconscious Mathilda had puzzled him more by this short sentence, than the Fraulein Carlowitz could have done by an hour of tortuous discourse. Schwendi had awaited the coming of the French ambassadors, but found it so impossible to account for their visit, for any other reasons than those which Maurice openly declared, that he resolved

to repair to Inspruck, and report the inutility of his remaining to watch the politics of a court, entirely devoted to amusement and magnificence.

## CHAPTER IX.

SCHWENDI had not proceeded half way on his journey, when a small party of horsemen joined his slender cavalcade.

On this day he had planned a longer march than he could compass; the night had surprised him, and he had just despatched a man forward to secure accommodation at the first village on their route; it was too dark to discover more than the outlines of men and horses. The intruders

kept in the rear for a short distance, then suddenly wheeled about, and galloped off.

The Colonel rode on, little heeding the circumstance, and intent only on reaching his resting-place, when he found that a stranger had spurred up abreast of him. He placed his hand on his pistol, but his self-invited companion did not seem to be in a condition to make any attack, for although he used every effort to keep up with the Colonel's increasing speed, he was evidently overcome by fatigue, and did so with great difficulty. His next conclusion was, that some traveller had tacitly placed himself under his protection for the short distance which soon brought them to their halting-place for the night. The Colonel entered the *gast-haus*: the unknown horseman followed him, and silently seated himself by the turf fire in the kitchen, still retaining the thick cloak which enveloped his person, and a fur cap, which, supplied with lappets

lined with the same material and fastened under the chin, nearly concealed his face. He anxiously watched till the supper was on the table, and they were alone ; then suddenly disengaging himself from his covering, displayed to his astonished master the form of his valet Bortoni, the one-eyed spy.

“A water sprite from the frozen Elbe !” cried the Colonel.

“I wish I were,” said the valet in a doleful tone, “for my body would not be mortal to ache as it now does. To shut a man up for weeks in a close prison, and then set him on a rough charger to ride a matter of forty leagues, is giving him a taste of the rack.”

A good supper, and the relation of his sufferings, restored in part Bortoni’s animation.

Schwendi assured him that he had believed in the report of his death.

The spy replied they would find the Duke was too clever for any of them ; on the whole

he could not complain of his treatment ; but he could not think of his first prison without horror, although he would have fared well, but for his sickness.

“ But how got you away, Bortoni ? ”

“ They said,” he replied, “ that as they did not need my sort of service, and you might, you were welcome to it ; but forbade me, on pain of death, ever to put my foot on Saxon territory again ; so, guarded by three troopers, I was delivered over to your people ; they told them jeeringly to use me well, for I had been kept with great care.”

Schwendi felt some compassion for him, and promised that when they reached Hoff on the following morning, for his convenience he would halt there for the rest of the day and night, but told him he must have been a bungler to get into such a scrape, from which charge the spy defended himself by observing, that he did not expect to find men so much attached to their

Prince, and so faithful to their trust, as to be above all price.

The early and long winter began to relax its icy bonds, and although the winds of March were bleak, there was every promise of a fair and genial spring.

Maurice had broken up his court at Wittenberg, and proceeded to Torgau, where, on the first of March, he convened his States, provided for the safety of his frontiers, and invested his brother Augustus with full powers to govern during his absence. In the meanwhile, Schoenberg was sent forward to prepare a suitable residence for him at Inspruck; thus amusing and deluding the Emperor, who was more disposed to believe in Maurice's attachment to himself, Carlowitz's reports, and Granvelle's doubts of his talents, than in Alva's dark suspicions, and the memorial from the ecclesiastical states.

Maurice was much moved when he embraced his little Augusta, and bade adieu to the gentle Agnes. He knew how uncertain and distant the time might be ere they would meet again, but as she wept upon his shoulder, he cheered and entreated her to hope, that as his cause was dutiful and just, so would it prosper.

"Heaven knows, my Agnes, I quit you unwillingly ; I go for your father's sake, but leave my dearest thoughts with you ;" then straining her again to his bosom, he tore himself from her arms, and commenced his journey in company with Carlowitz, Sir Otho, and Konrad. Hendrick had received secret orders three days previously to push on with a small company, and wait at a village two posts beyond Leipsic. Thumelda cautioned Konrad during his absence to entertain no jealous fears, and felt thankful, distressed as she was at parting, that his weapon was a pen, and not a pike. She

wondered much to see her mistress so composed, but a whisper from Maurice had set her heart at ease.

On this occasion, the Elector had determined to travel in one of those splendid but cumbrous vehicles, which, inconvenient and uneasy, were used only on state journeys by royalty and high nobility. A separate carriage was appointed for Carlowitz, who wrapped in his furs, and conning over in his mind his successful treachery, and the high favour in which he stood with the Emperor, in spite of the jolting of the carriage, sank by degrees into a dreamy state, visions of wealth and greater eminence floating before him.

The Emperor testified regard for him as he had proved, when, on the occasion of a transient illness, he had in haste dispatched his own physician to him. The Elector also, who could not, and evidently did not suspect his secret correspondence with

Granvelle, loaded him with favours, and opened his heart to him. It would be extraordinary if increase of fortune did not follow such prospects ; but plotters are often so intent upon their own plans, and so confident in their own sagacity, that they blindly fall into snares prepared with little art to entrap them.

Some two posts beyond Leipsic, the golden dreams of the self-complacent minister were interrupted by a sudden jerk of the carriage. The cavalcade halted, and some confusion seemed to bespeak an accident. Konrad, who was on horseback, rode up, and hurriedly announced that the Elector was ill. Sir Otho left the carriage, and resigned to the minister his seat opposite to the Duke.

“Carlowitz,” said Maurice in a feeble tone, while leaning his head forward upon his hands, as if in pain, “I know not whether it is owing to this jolting machine, to which I but little use myself, or to an indisposition

which I have felt for some days hanging over me, but I am ill and weary, and can proceed no farther. I must either rest at Leipsic, or return to Torgau, if I can reach the latter place, which, in my present state, I fear will be impossible. This illness is most ill-timed and unfortunate."

"A few hours rest at our next post, will perhaps restore your Highness," said Carlowitz.

Maurice shook his head.

"I am too ill for that, even if I could trust myself to the accommodation I should find ; I must not risk the chance." He continued with apparent difficulty : "The Emperor is expecting me, I wish you to hasten forward, make my apology for this unavoidable delay, and assure him that ere long I will wait upon him at Inspruck."

He now leaned back with every appearance of exhaustion and suffering ; then after

a few moments, making an effort to rally, added—

“ My faithful and trustworthy friend, good speed to you on your journey ; I doubt not that in a few days I shall be able to follow you.”

The minister, after many expressions of condolence and anxiety for the Elector’s health, returned to his own vehicle ; some of the suite had orders to accompany him, and Maurice, as his carriage passed his own on the road, watched his departure with a smile of satisfaction.

“ There goes a traitor,” he apostrophized to himself, “ a spy upon my bosom’s secrets ; happily at last I am relieved from all these serpents, who would have entwined their coils around my heart, to drink its blood.”

Hendrick at this moment galloped up with two led horses. Maurice sprang from the carriage, crying ; “ Now to horse ! where is Count Heideck ?”

Before the question could be answered, Heideck, with Henry of Mansfeldt, rode forward.

“ You, Sir Otho, mount and make the best of your way back to Torgau. The carriage I have quitted shall wait at Leipsic, whither another will convey your lady : conduct her to Augsburg, where doubtless by this time you will find the Father Augustine. Other friends possibly will join her there ; it is scarcely necessary I should press upon you the importance of despatch.”

The Duke leapt on his horse, and was soon out of sight, while Otho rapidly retraced his steps to Torgau. He paid a hasty visit to Krantz, who was now settled at Leipsic, and with whom he had spoken a few hours before on his way through the town. He told him the change of plans. On his return, he found Clotilda prepared to commence the long journey which had been appointed for them. Her tears fell fast as

she took leave of the amiable Electress, and expressed her gratitude for the kindness and condescension she had shown her; again a wanderer, with the probability of war, which would keep her in continual alarm for her husband's safety, there was little to console her for quitting the protection she had for some weeks enjoyed, but there was a mitigation to her regret in the hope, that if war must be, she would be nearer the seat of it, and in the way of procuring frequent intelligence.

They had scarcely quitted the city of Leipsic, when Krantz rode up to the carriage. He had come with Schramm to form an additional escort, and would not be denied; besides, the Baron had left his lair, and no one knew whither he was gone.

This intelligence caused Otho to consent with less reluctance that the small band headed by Ludwig, which the Elector had left at his disposal, should be further

strengthened by the protection of the honest miller.

As Maurice had predicted, they found the good Father at Augsburg, who, to their joy, informed them that they might shortly expect the Countess and Mathilda.

Maurice's intentions were no longer veiled. William of Hesse had joined him; proclamations were issued by Henry of France his ally, Albert of Brandenburg, and himself, declaring the causes which had compelled them to have recourse to arms.

The towns before which they appeared did not attempt resistance. Donnavert yielded, Augsburg was invested without delay, and, as Maurice was previously aware it would not, did not hold out. The commander of the small force within its garrison, consisting of four companies of infantry, was well informed that the citizens would not suffer him to risk the destruction of their town by a vain opposition. Mau-

rice re-established their council, and here as well as in the other towns he had reduced, restored the citizens to many of their abridged rights, re-instated the magistrates and Protestant clergy.

Our travellers, when the army appeared before the walls, experienced but little alarm: its numbers they knew would preserve them from witnessing any contention; but the hour, the dreaded hour, was come, when Otho and Clotilda must part.

Her heart beat painfully when he presented himself ready equipped for the journey.

“ What, so soon ?” she faltered out.

“ Even so, my love, but not, as you see, for war. The Duke commands my attendance upon him to Lintz, where he is to meet King Ferdinand, and essay one effort more for peace.”

To cover from her husband’s observation the faintness which came over her, she sank

into the nearest seat. Their last parting, to what peril and woe had it not been the forerunner ! She had no parent or sister to listen to her apprehensions, or soothe her fears. Kind friends would soon be around her ; but could she add her sorrows and alarms to theirs, already but too many ? This warfare, so little likely to be arrested, might rob her of him she so passionately, deeply loved.

“ Where danger is, there you will be, my own, my beloved Otho ; but, ah ! in the heat of battle, let one tender thought of your Clotilda mingle with your ardour, and seek not honour where danger only can be reaped.”

She stopped, lest sobs and words should issue in twin partnership. She sat in silence, and gazed upon him as though she would infuse her spirit into his, that he might bear her inmost thoughts with him, to temper his courage with her feminine tenderness.

Otho bent over her, and the warm tear fell upon the hand he clasped: she kissed the precious drop away.

“Heaven guard thee!” were her last words, as he rushed back to take a final embrace. She fell on her knees, with consciousness enough only to know that her parting prayer could be granted by that Power alone to whom she had appealed.

It had long been settled that the faithful Ludwig should accompany Otho. He was discreet and intelligent; in battle, ill or wounded, his watchfulness could be relied upon.

When Clotilda arose, the thoughtful Thumelda placed her beautiful boy in her arms: she judged wisely, that his innocent caresses would be the fittest and surest consolation. When the good father visited her some hours after, he found her calm; hope had stolen in to assuage the pang of parting. He had accompanied Otho to the camp, and

had remained with him till the moment of departure.

Poor Henry, while the army was before Augsburg, lost no opportunity of interesting Clotilda in his cause; if she had condemned, she now pitied him, for the impetuous youth was sobered into the care-worn suppliant. She could not resist his importunities to plead for his pardon. Augustine had just informed her that the army was moving towards Ulm, when Henry almost immediately followed him.

“The chances of war, fair lady,” he said, much agitated, “are doubtful: to you I entrust this letter; if I fall, it may engender softer feelings to my memory. Farewell!”

Clotilda watched him as he rode through the gates.

“I will do thy bidding, poor youth; and if I know thy cousin’s heart, my task will not be a very difficult one.”

Towards the middle of April, Clotilda

had again the happiness of embracing the Countess and Mathilda. The Count had accompanied them the greater part of the way, but had turned off to join the army.

Mathilda's forced spirits and delicate health, while her mother's watchful eye told plainly she was aware of the painful change, grieved those who had seen her but a few weeks since in all the bloom of youth, health, and confidence of happiness.

Clotilda faithfully kept her promise, and Henry's letter was soon in his cousin's possession. Every sentence spoke penitence, and breathed unalterable love: his desolation of heart was depicted in such glowing colours, and his folly so eloquently repented, that Mathilda almost accused herself of harshness in withholding his supplications before they parted.

## CHAPTER X.

MAURICE, finding that the preliminary stipulation proposed by the Emperor, before he would discuss any of the points for which the confederate princes had taken the field, was, that they should disband their army, did not hazard delay by discussing such an insidious requisition. He agreed with Ferdinand upon a truce, which was to commence on the twenty-eighth of that month—May,—and continue till the eighth of June; then hastened to join the army which had

fruitlessly besieged Ulm, at Gundelfingen, and marched onwards with celerity towards Fiessen, in order to intercept the Emperor's troops, who were to assemble beyond at Reutte. Light skirmishes with detached bodies brought no further advantages than a few prisoners and stragglers, who confirmed the reports of the scouts, that the Imperial troops were already in possession of the passes of the Alps, and that any advance through those guarded defiles would be impracticable.

The French Ambassador advised immediate action.

"The Emperor's person," he observed, "may reward our diligence; the chase will be well repaid by the capture of such game."

"True," replied Maurice, gaily; "but I possess no cage sufficiently capacious to hold so large a bird."

Otho and Henry had been engaged in

every skirmish: on whichever side the trumpet sounded, their helms and plumed crests were seen foremost in the fray; the love of glory, and personal attachment and gratitude to the Elector, ruled Otho's heart, and rendered the power of his arm invincible. Maurice was not daunted by the obstacles before him; a few days only remained for action, before the truce would bind him to a temporary peace; more accurate information, however, as to the force and position of the enemy, with the numbers defending the passes, was necessary before he advanced to Fiessen.

To Otho, with a chosen band of picked men, he gave the command of this dangerous service, which required courage, regulated by caution. In the silence of the night, Otho and Henry set off on their perilous expedition. The moon was shining brightly on the calm surface of the Leck, (whose tranquil waters were soon to be taint-

ed with the hot blood of strife, and steep in their cold embrace the angry passions of contending men,) as Otho and his select troop passed over the bridge, and rode in the direction of Reutte.

Skirting the enemy's camp, they pushed forward towards the passes ; then making a short circuit, again reconnoitred the position of the main body. They had proceeded some miles on their return, and were crossing a green and level spot which bordered the direct route to their own camp, when Henry turning to Otho, observed—

“It appears not likely that our knowledge will be challenged on the route, we shall gain some credit at little risk.”

“Hark ! I doubt not so,” cried Otho.

Henry halted, and looked towards the direction where his friend pointed. A dark mass was distinguishable, and a party consisting of about fifty horsemen, were seen emerging from a clump of trees which bor-

dered the other side of the road. After having left the vicinity of the camp, Otho not apprehending any encounter, had sent forward the major part of his troop, but he still outnumbered the foe, and trusted that he should effect a capture without much bloodshed. He formed his men in compact order, then crying, “Forward!” dashed into the midst of the enemy; but his adversaries stood the shock, and made a brave resistance, the example and exertions of their leader who, with frantic gestures and imprecations rallied his men, still prolonging the contest. Otho saw his people fall around him, many overthrown by the single arm of his adversary.

Ludwig cried out, “By his red plume, Reiterstein!”

With a bound Otho cleared a horse which had just been killed before him, and hand to hand encountered his fierce foe. Their strife was deadly; blow followed blow, and clanked on their steel armour. They wheeled,

retreated and advanced to secure a sure aim, and by degrees merged apart from the general mêlée. The blood as it trickled through the vambraces, crimsoned Otho's gauntlet, while his scarf was cut asunder.

“By my life, the bastard bleeds!” cried Reiterstein.

“The venom in thy veins shall repay it,” retorted Otho, who raising himself in his stirrups, cleft the lacings of the Baron’s helmet, which rolling on the ground, left exposed, in the pale light of the moon, his features distorted by rage and fury. The blood streamed over his corslet as he reeled in his saddle.

A cry of, “Quarter! quarter!” arose from the Baron’s vanquished followers, who were flying towards the camp.

Otho pressed on him, but ere he could repeat the attack, his unhelmed foe dexterously backed his horse, turned, and fled. Pursuit was useless so near the enemy’s

camp. Some prisoners were secured, and with the wounded under Henry's charge were carried forward, while Otho put spurs to his horse, and was speedily with Maurice, to give an account of his enterprize.

"The force in the camp, your Highness," he reported, "I should say, does not exceed, if it reaches, a thousand men; its dispersion will open the way to the passes."

He then gave a relation of the skirmish; they had made some prisoners, but one of his own men was missing.

"You are wounded, Sir Otho."

"So slightly, your Highness, that a kerchief will be the only surgeon I shall require."

"So," thought Maurice, "Reiterstein is with the Emperor; this I expected."

Otho had not quitted the late scene of action more than an hour, when another party of six troopers appeared on the field.

One dismounted, and going carefully over the ground, raised part of a torn scarf, dabbed it in blood, thrust it in his bosom, and resuming the fallen helmet, remounted and galloped off in an opposite direction from the camp.

About an hour past noon on the subsequent day, Thumelda, her broken accents foreboding ill news, announced to Clotilda the arrival of a messenger from the camp.

“Your pale cheeks,” exclaimed Clotilda, while her own became more blanched, “speak evil tidings ; he is slain !”

“No, no ! dear lady, he lives, but severely wounded in a night skirmish.”

“Where is the messenger?” demanded Augustine, who had entered just before Thumelda’s appearance.

“Close at hand, good Father, he says he is in haste.”

“Seek him, Thumelda, and let us learn the truth.”

The man was ushered in, soiled and heated.

“What is this tale you bring?” asked the monk in trepidation.

“This, Reverend Father, that Sir Otho is dangerously hurt, and desires the immediate presence of yourself with his wife and child, for the surgeons give us little hope.”

Augustine, scarcely less agitated than the sinking Clotilda, in tremulous accents desired to know what tokens he brought in corroboration of his story.

The soldier drew forth a portion of Otho’s well-known scarf, stained with blood

“Have you no letter? Have you no escort?” again questioned Augustine.

“None, he was in too great extremity to admit of a moment’s delay;” and then added, after a short pause, “no doubt they will send protection to meet you.”

“Where are we to seek him?” cried Clotilda.

"At the camp, near Fiessen, Madam."

With wild intreaties, she urged instant departure; it was in vain that the Father hinted at delay.

"At least wait my father's return," said Thumelda; "he started at day-break with Schramm, in company with a troop who were to join the army, hoping that, some miles from hence, he might fall in with a messenger or wounded stragglers returning to the town."

But Clotilda, whose fancy portrayed before her eyes the image of her dying husband, bore down all opposition.

"Let us away!" she exclaimed, "and fly to him, nor delay to grant perhaps his last request, who never denied my smallest wish."

As the soldier watched her agony, he muttered some inaudible words, turned away, and hurried from their presence. A hasty message was despatched to the

Countess. Absorbed in grief which was too great for words, Clotilda, with the Father, Thumelda and her child, entered the heavy vehicle which had brought them to Augsburg; their progress was slow, and each lagging moment she felt might terminate the life of her husband, each breath of air be loaded with his last sigh. The Father would not rouse her from the half senseless state in which she lay back in the carriage: he left her to her sorrow; hope he could give none, and it was useless to offer consolation where none could avail. They had not left the city half an hour, when Krantz arrived to hear the melancholy news which all were eager to communicate. His heart misgave him.

“Where was the messenger?”

“Gone!”

“Did he accompany them?”

“No, he rode off as soon as he had spoken to the Lady Clotilda.”

The miller was much troubled. Konrad might have written, he thought. Sir Otho surely would not have exposed his wife and child to traverse a country, the seat of war, unprotected? Even the Elector or Count Mansfeldt would have ordered some escort. A few moments only were spent in reflection; he hastily took some refreshment while fresh horses were sought, and accompanied by Schramm, pursued the route which it was said the travellers had taken.

These had not proceeded many miles, when the carriage was surrounded by an armed party; the drivers, compelled to turn from the direct road, were commanded to greater speed, and Augustine catching a glimpse of Hartorff's face, perceived with dismay, that his almost undefined fears had too sure a basis, and that they had been treacherously allured from their asylum. Clotilda, who now saw how unadvisedly she had rejected the Father's counsel for at least

a short delay, and had silenced his doubts by her entreaties, derived but one consolation in her extremity,—that there was hope her husband might be safe. The night was breaking into morning when the tired horses were unyoked, and the travellers, placed in covered litters, guarded on either side. The Father knew but too well that their journey would be through the defiles, and that the impregnable fortress of Ehrenberg was in all probability their destination. Thumelda's deep sobs were the only sounds which broke the silence of this most unhappy and terrified party.

As night fell on this same day, the clamour of battle near Fiessen had ceased, the Emperor's advanced troops had been totally routed and defeated, the fugitives spread the contagion of their panic to the assembling bodies at Reutte, dead and dying strewed the field, when Otho, still clad in steel harness, and nearly spent with the fight,

entered the tent of his wounded companion in arms, Henry of Mansfeldt, who turning his languid eyes towards him, said with a friendly smile—

“ You fought like a lion, Otho.”

“ I was not more than equal to yourself,” he replied, “ but what say the surgeons ?”

“ They give me hope,” he answered with a sigh, “ but I care not, it is even as I wished.”

“ Say not thus, my brave friend. Have you seen your uncle ?”

“ Not yet; I suppose he is in council with the Duke and Count Heideck.”

“ I will seek him,” said Otho; “ measures must be taken for your removal before we march to-morrow.”

Mansfeldt was soon at his nephew’s side; with pride he had watched his brave bearing through the fight. The short conversation which passed between them seemed to revive

the sufferer, and he sank into a quiet slumber.

The *réveillé* had not sounded, and Otho was but half equipped, when Krantz staggered into the tent. He could scarcely articulate—

“ Where is the Lady Clotilda ?”

Otho seized his arm.

“ What of my wife, Krantz ?”

“ Ah ! what of your wife and my child ?”  
the miller gasped out; “ deceived, betrayed !” Then swallowing the emotion which nearly choked him, he related the manner in which they had, in company with the Father, been induced to quit Augsburg.

Otho was frantic: the destruction of his wife and child appeared inevitable.

Krantz faintly hoped there might be a chance of overtaking them before they reached Ehrenberg, to which place he had no doubt Reiterstein would carry them.

Otho rushed from the tent, stated their

peril to the Elector, and besought him to let him press forward and clear the passes.

Maurice, shocked and grieved at the villainous stratagem the Baron had practised, granted his request without hesitation, and a strong force preceded the main army.

Henry was carried into the town, carefully attended by his uncle, who Maurice had insisted should remain with him.

The unfortunate termination of the battle on the preceding day caused such consternation among the Emperor's troops, that they were chased from their posts, and offered but a feeble resistance to Maurice's progress.

Otho, with undaunted valour, bore down all opposition where any stand was made, and Reiterstein gained his eyrie with his wretched captives, as he appeared with Duke George under the walls. The redoubt below the Castle was soon carried with irresistible bravery as the rest of the army

came up; but the garrison laughed their enemies to scorn, while they hurled every species of missile upon them from above.

But we must turn awhile to the helpless party who were now lodged in the same stronghold with the fierce Reiterstein. Having given orders for their safe custody, with some difficulty he dismounted from his horse. The wound in his head, aggravated by the unremitting fatigue of the journey, subdued for a time even his iron frame. He was satisfied that his prisoners could neither escape nor be rescued, and retired to have his wound examined, and seek some rest and refreshment, postponing for a few hours his purpose of complete and unparallelled vengeance.

Clotilda, ever firm in danger, now endeavoured to comfort the unhappy Father, who reproached himself for his facility in giving way too readily, and contrary to his better judgment. Sinking on her knees, she prayed

in all humility for fortitude to meet the fate which she doubted not awaited her.

Every avenue was sought by Otho and those with him, who were equally concerned. Scouts were sent round in every direction ; the most impracticable places were deemed by them practicable. With straining eyes, they watched every movement of the besieged who perched on high, seemed, by the defences which nature as well as art had planted round them, to be placed beyond the power of any human force. Krantz's distress of mind equalled Otho's ; while Konrad, scarcely in his senses, explored the fissures of every rock around.

Krantz threw himself on the ground : his child, his innocent child, in the hands of a rude soldiery ; the thought maddened him, and he groaned in unutterable anguish.

“ Krantz ! Krantz !” cried Ludwig, in breathless haste, “ hope, arisc.”

The miller started to his feet. A goat-herd stood between Ludwig and his father.

“Sir Otho! where is Sir Otho? we must instantly to the Elector,” cried the soldier; “before night falls, Ehrenberg may be ours.”

They met the broken-hearted Otho, and repaired together to seek Maurice.

“Whom have you here?” said the Elector, looking at the goatherd.

“Man,” whispered Ludwig, “tell your tale.” But the poor fellow, bewildered and over-awed, made a sign to Ludwig to speak for him, who proceeded briefly to state—  
“Riding round on the plain just underneath that bird’s nest, your Highness, in the forlorn hope of finding some accessible part, I met this good man; he told me, that concealed behind a rock, he had watched while his goats were browsing, and discovered a practicable path, although dangerous and difficult.”

"How did he make this discovery?" asked Maurice.

"In pursuing one of his goats, your Highness, which had strayed from the flock, and clambered up the steep."

"Ah! think you the path is feasible?"

"He believes it to be so; and as he pointed it out to me, I should say it was, if carefully and resolutely attempted; the more so, as it is unsuspected by the garrison."

"Let no time be lost," cried Maurice. "Goatherd, thou shalt be handsomely rewarded. Sir Otho, let Duke George collect his choicest men; if dauntless courage can win it, it shall be ours."

Duke George, preceded by the goatherd, followed by Otho and those who had so much at stake, with the bravest and steadiest of his troops, were soon in silence ascending the narrow and rugged path.

Reiterstein again intruded his hateful presence on his captives. With scorn he

spurned Clotilda's pleadings, and scoffed at the Father's exhortations. Death alone could satiate his revenge ; he swore that their mutilated bodies should be sent as messengers to the usurper Maurice, and his bastard knight.

"Mercy, mercy," screamed Clotilda, "in mercy spare my child!"

"And leave an heir," he cried, "to inherit your fair lands ; never ! he is not the first bantling that has fed the eagles, eh ! Hartorff?"

"At the peril of Heaven's eternal judgment and condemnation," cried the Father, "harm them not, everlasting punishment will be thy retribution for the deed."

"Silence !" roared the Baron, "no priest-craft terrors for me, old man : to save me from the scandal of the church, a more secret doom but not less sure, will be yours ; but first your eyes shall witness the punishment your meddling has brought

upon this woman and her brat; away with them!"

Reiterstein tore the child from his mother's arms. With distracted cries, Clotilda clung to him; Hartorff and some of the Baron's outcast retainers had seized the Father.

"Hartorff, bring forth your intended bride; the scene may teach her docility:" and a horrid maniac laugh rang in the ears of his victims.

With relentless haste the prisoners were borne along; the Father, with the effort of a man in the prime and vigour of manhood, released himself from the grasp of the ruffians who held him, drew Clotilda back from the edge of the precipice, and clutched at the child.

"Monster, villain," cried the monk, "yet hold, e're thou plungest thy soul into perdition;" and he held on high the cross which was suspended from his girdle.

The soldiers, awed for a moment, shrunk back; his commanding figure and saint-like aspect, as standing bareheaded on the ledge of the precipice, he displayed the sacred emblem, startled even their hardened natures.

Clotilda uttered a wild scream which echoed from rock to rock, as she saw her terrified child struggling in Reiterstein's arms. In witnessing her agony half his revenge was accomplished. In his own mind he had doomed the most terrible fate to the wretched Clotilda, but he was determined that every terror and torture in his power to inflict, should be the forerunner of his basest and most execrable purposes, but as he turned to gloat his eyes with her despair, a poniard was buried to the hilt in his breast; as he fell, the dreaded figure of Schramm stood over him.

Augustine snatched the screaming child, and bore him, amidst the clash and din of

arms, into the Castle. Otho raised his now senseless wife and fought his way, till he had placed her in safety. Thumelda was still struggling with Hartorff; a whirling blow struck him to the ground, and the contending parties in the fierceness of their fight trampled upon him; the released girl saw only that Konrad was there, and sprang into her father's arms.

Troops continued to mount the steep; besieged and besiegers fought with desperation, but as fresh numbers poured in, the combat for the defenders became each moment more doubtful. Under showers of cannon balls and musketry, Maurice attacked them on the other side of the Castle, and aided those who had already arrived.

“Quarter,” and “surrender,” now sounded on every side, and ere night fell the supposed impregnable fortress was in Maurice’s possession.

Life was not yet extinct in the Baron ; when he was borne into the hall, the poniard was still buried in its bed. Otho covered with blood and smoke, received his beloved wife in his arms ; the dark Baron, struggling with death, saw assembled around him, those whom he had persecuted with such unrelenting hate.

“ Baron Reiterstein,” cried Schramm, “ I told thee that to thy dying hour I would not cease to follow thee ; thy soul contemplated my murder, but thy hand failed to accomplish thy soul’s purpose. One intended crime is blotted from the dark catalogue of thy misdeeds.”

The Baron looked on him in doubt ; he writhed with pain, his eyes were becoming dim, while Schramm’s slight figure and pallid countenance flitted like a phantom before his receding senses.

The Father drew near ; he prayed for the departing soul, Reiterstein motioned him

away, while with an expiring effort he raised himself, and drew the poniard from his bosom ; the blood spurted forth in a torrent, he stretched out his arms, sank back and expired. As Reiterstein breathed his last, Maurice and some of his officers entered ; he gave Hendrick and Ludwig orders for the removal of the body, and desired that Konrad would take possession of any papers, either found upon him or belonging to him ; he was carried to the chapel, some papers and a key of curious workmanship were taken from his person. Among the few who fell, was the soldier who had been taken prisoner in the skirmish, and whom the Baron by threats and bribes, had induced to decoy his late captives from Augsburg. Clotilda's distress had moved him to compassion, and he had fought to save those, whom he had assisted to entrap.

Hendrick and Ludwig now hastened to

procure some refreshment for the exhausted Clotilda, who was obliged to be supported from the hall. It seemed hardly possible for her to believe they were safe, and their dire enemy lying in the stillness of death, till her husband bending over her, and the tender care of those around, spoke of peace and security.

With the first streak of day, Otho conducted them into the valley, and leaving them under the charge of those so attached to them, re-ascended the steep, still slippery with the blood of many a friend and foe. As he slowly climbed the precipitous pathway, sounds of discord reached his ear. At the Castle he found all in disorder and confusion; some mercenaries in Rifeberg's service, were loudly clamouring for additional pay, as a largess for the last day's service; the mutiny was nearly at its height, when he made his way through the throng of riotous soldiery. Maurice reso-

lutely refused their demand as unreasonable, exhorted them not to tarnish by such disgraceful conduct, the glory they had won, but march forward obedient to their leaders.

“Largess! largess!” they roared in one continued din.

The foremost of the brawlers thrust forward his pike to strike at the Elector.

“Hendrick,” cried the Duke, “make that fellow your prisoner.”

“Largess! largess!” still yelled the mercenaries.

Duke George and Otho, with the officers around him, could hardly with all their exertions, beat off the soldiers, or secure him from the attack now made upon him, with pikes and the butt ends of muskets.

“For Heaven’s sake, your Highness, fly!” cried Otho, “we are not enough to stem their mad fury; with our bodies we will cover your retreat.”

Maurice, who saw not only the jeopardy in which he was placed himself, but the

danger to which he exposed the faithful few who were contending against armed hundreds, gave way to the necessity of the moment; fighting and retreating, he gained the camp; thus driven out from this stronghold by those men who, but a few hours before, had fought so valiantly by his side to put him in possession of it. Fresh troops were sent to reduce the mutineers to subjection, with the promise of booty at Innspruck.

This unforeseen delay was fatal to Maurice's plan of surprising the Emperor, and thus dictating the conditions he had failed to gain by repeated appeals.

Hartorff still lived, and was carried to the camp, while at midnight the Baron was consigned to the grave.

Two regiments of light infantry marched forward and were soon followed by the Elector, and the confederate princes, while the horse, and one regiment of foot, were sent back to Fiessen, to guard the passes.

Clotilda's wishes that she should not again be parted from her husband were acceded to; the hardy and willing Ludwig undertook to bear the news of their safety to the Countess, with a message that she might now pursue her journey to Innspruck without danger, and join them there.

When the Duke arrived at Zirlen, he found, that the Emperor, learning the fall of Ehrenberg, had fled in haste during the night with a few followers only, leaving Innspruck undefended. An immediate but useless pursuit was commenced: save the sacking of the Emperor's palace, the town remained undisturbed, as all had, where Maurice's arms had prevailed.

Hartorff's career was drawing to a close.

Maurice had determined that if he survived, he should expiate his crimes upon the scaffold.

Augustine in vain preached repentance to the hardened man, who, with coarse ribaldry,

rejected his pious admonitions ; still he did not flinch from his sacred duty, but journeyed with him to Inspruck.

As they entered the town, Hartorff, being borne on an open horse litter, with Hendrick and the Father on either side, followed by three soldiers, many idlers gathered round, and pressing forward to gain a closer view of the prisoner, obliged them to pause.

A closely hooded mendicant friar, who had joined the procession as it entered the street, which led to the prison, thrust back some of the gazers, crying—

“ Disturb not by your curiosity the last hours of a dying man ;” and taking hold of an urchin, who, with mouth wide gaping, was staring into the litter, heedless of the horse’s feet, pushed him aside ; as he turned, he cast his eyes on the malefactor, looked steadily on him for a moment, then retreated, and followed the party to the prison.

While they were waiting for the jailor to receive the criminal, the friar drew near, and leaning over the side of the litter, which had been placed on the ground, said—

“Hartorff again.”

Hartorff feebly raised his head.

“Ah! by the voice, Friar Jerome; I need you much.”

“For ministering to thy soul, man; thou hast one near thee more fit for the holy offices of the church than myself; for other aid, thy case I fear is beyond my art.”

He then turned to Augustine.

“Have I your permission, Father, to assist this man? At the prison I am a frequent visiter.”

Augustine, to whom the friar was well known by name, for he was zealous among the poor, willingly acceded to his request.

Hartorff entreated vehemently for the friar to examine his wounds. When he had

done so, and had given directions for his treatment, he returned to the Father.

"I know not," he observed, "to what penalty of the law that man may be amenable, but he will not live to incur the execution of it."

"Villain as he is," replied Augustine, "I am glad of it; for if he be adjudged according to his crimes, he can expect no mercy in the manner of his death."

"His hurts are inward," said Jerome, "his breast bone and left ribs are crushed."

They now parted, appointing to meet at the prison in the evening. They found on their next visit, that the medicines had relieved the patient, but the friar continued in the same opinion, that recovery, or life prolonged beyond some hours, was impossible.

"I have heard your skill much spoken of," said Augustine.

“As a mountaineer, Father,” he replied, “I learnt the virtues of the balms which the beneficent hand of nature strews over hill and valley. For a while,” he added with a sigh, “I studied surgery, and thence the slender knowledge which I acquired in youth, has been much improved of late years by constant practice among my poorer brethren.”

He then related his care of Hartorff at Magdeburg.

On Augustine’s return from the prison, he was rejoiced to find that Ludwig had arrived, and that the Count and Countess would be with them on the next day. He stated that a messenger had been despatched to Augsburg immediately after the battle of Fiessen, at which place the Count was joined by his family without delay, so that he was spared the longer journey. Count Henry’s wounds had proved less serious than the surgeons on their first hasty examination

had supposed, and he was accompanying them ; Otho rode forward to meet the travellers, and at noon, Clotilda once more embraced these valued friends.

From others they heard of her miraculous escape, for as yet the scene was too recent and its recollections too dreadful for her to be able to allude to it.

The Countess again and again folded the rescued child in her arms, while her tears wetted his bright hair. Henry was carried to his room, but from Mathilda's happier countenance it was apparent, that mediation in his favour would not be needed. He remonstrated against a separation from his family, but obeyed, and had not the courage to request his aunt's company. His looks spoke too eloquently to be misunderstood, and the Countess answering to the silent pleaders, nodded assent.

Augustine, when he visited the prison with Hendrick on the following day, found

Jerome upon his knees by the pallet on which Hartorff was stretched, exhorting the impenitent sinner to penitence.

“I tell thee, man, thine hours are numbered.”

“Thou liest, it is false!” cried Hartorff, “I will not die, thou canst save me if thou wilt.”

“Impossible! I have told thee thy case is beyond my skill, thou art inwardly crushed.”

The pallet shook under the wretch at this announcement.

“Even now,” continued Jerome, “pains are darting through thy body, thou hast still time for confession.”

“I will confess nought, friar,” he exclaimed fiercely.

“As thou hopest for one ray of mercy, Hartorff, if to any one thou canst make reparation, do it.”

“Ha! ha!” he cried, “To whom can I

make reparation ? to the heroes who contended against our right of levying contributions on their purses in the Appennines ? to Mansfeldt's heir, whom I hurled into the valley to feed the wild birds ? to Schramm, whose bones are whitening in the dark wood ? to—to—" but a pang shot through his frame, which arrested his speech, and went through every limb.

"Art thou convinced now that death's hand is upon thee ?" said Jerome as Hartorff sunk back on the pillow ; but terror was depicted on his now rigid features, and he answered not ; the friar rose from his knees ; at that moment the cowl fell back from his head.

"What thou ?" said the dying man.

"Hush !" interrupted the friar, "breathe not my name."

Augustine fixed his eyes on Jerome, who became confused.

"Surely, surely !" said the Father, while

his looks were still rivetted on the friar, “ I should know thee; thou art not so much changed, that I should forget thee; nor have years stolen from my recollection features it so behoved me to remember; I have sought thee far and wide.”

“ You sought me, Father, in the haunts of robbers, among the beggars in the streets, amidst the bands of mercenaries, in the dens of thieves, in the cells of the condemned. You sought me not, robed in sackcloth and ashes, among the honest but poor and needy, as curing their ills, and administering to their necessities; you sought me not at the ALTAR,” and Jerome fervently kissed the cross he held in his hand.

“ From thy robber’s garb,” replied the Father, “ I sought thee as the companion of bad men, from thine act and air of penitence, when last and once only we met, I sought thee as well among the holy.”

“ Did you then think,” said Jerome, seiz-

ing his hand, and looking anxiously in his face, “that one germ of virtue might still blossom in the robber’s heart?”

“I did,” replied Augustine, “and heaven be praised, that which I hoped might be, is.”

“Thank you, thank you, Father!” and the friar’s countenance was lighted with a gleam of joy.

A groan from Hartorff telling of intense and internal agony, drew them again to the side of his pallet.

“Save me! save me!” he screamed, “there is a gulf before me, I am burning.”

“Pray, pray,” cried Jerome.

“I cannot, I know not how,” cried the terrified culprit, “it is too late. Oh! torture! but I will not die,” and he fought and struggled with the convulsions which again seized him, and left him with the clammy drops of death standing upon his forehead.

The good men knelt and prayed, while

Hendrick endeavoured to raise him up, and relieve his laboured breathing; his face was livid, drops of blood and froth issued from his discoloured lips; with a death spasm he clutched the hands of Hendrick, and raised himself upright, turned his eyes on the holy men, his gripe relaxed,—another slight convulsion left him a corpse.

## CHAPTER XI.

“ ALL is over,” said Augustine, as he slowly moved away from the horrid spectacle before them ; he left the narrow prison, and felt that he must breathe the fresh air. The scenes in which he had lately been engaged, added to his wearisome journeys, had much shaken him ; he gladly seated himself upon a bench in the prison yard, and suffered the light breeze to blow over his pale forehead. Jerome soon joined him, the Father turned to him.

“What of that child, whom twenty-four years since you placed in my hands; tell me I beseech you, where did you find him, whence was he stolen?”

“To hear this Father, you must listen to a tale of crime and sorrow, but I will now conceal nothing from you, the death of those most concerned, (for I hear that Reiterstein is no more,) absolves me from my oath.”

The Father bowed, and the friar proceeded.

“I was the only child of a wealthy herdsman, the idol of my parents; as a boy I loved to climb the highest rocks and mountains, and gather the wild herbs and flowers which grew upon their sides. By diligent questioning among the peasants I learned the medicinal properties of many of these gifts to man, and having a better education than my informers, often successfully applied decoctions of them. My father, proud of my success and aptitude in

acquiring the little our good priest could teach me, and thinking my inclination led that way, decided on sending me to study surgery and physic at Padua. My progress for the first two years was rapid, but unfortunately falling into the company of a set of dissolute youths, books were thrown aside, and dissipation ruled, and led me into every folly. Under different pretences I called continually upon my indulgent parents for fresh supplies. At last they refused any further advances, and when at the end of three years I returned home, I found them reduced to poverty ; my extravagance had ruined them. My heart reproached me, and I resolved to labour that I might in part retrieve my errors, but this was not permitted ; they found that I had deceived them, and the barb, thrown by the hand of a worthless child, had entered their hearts. In a few months I was left alone and penniless. I dared not return to Padua, where I had contracted debts I could never hope to pay.

I became a wanderer without a home. Unhappily, (I need not weary you by relating by what chance,) I met the Baron von Reiterstein; he was about my own age, with manners calculated to win my confidence. We became constant associates, and the habits I had contracted at Padua encouraged by him, were again indulged in: I had no tie to check my inclination, no voice to warn me. In the mirth of those with whom I now constantly mixed, I found amusement; they seemed to have no care; I did not in any folly stop to reflect that their gaiety proceeded from the callousness of their hearts. A horrid oath was required of me ere I joined the bandit band; that fearful oath bound me to secrecy: I dared neither reveal nor fly from the daily atrocities I witnessed," the friar shuddered. "This life of crime soon became hateful to me, and day and night I prayed to be snatched from my bondage. Reiterstein was

sometimes absent, his return generally preceded some hazardous exploit. On one of these occasions he brought Hartorff with him, and the next day the whole force was mustered. Every man was doubly-armed, and some were posted in ambush to give notice at the first appearance of a well guarded party of travellers, who were expected, and supposed to be prepared, if necessary, for resistance. So it proved ; we were beaten off, but returned to the charge : we had contrived to overset one of the heavy carriages, it was quickly ransacked, and from within we drew forth a woman and a child ; the poor woman was dead, a bullet had pierced her brain, but the child was uninjured.”

“ The age of the child ?” interrupted the Father.

“ I judge about a year,” he replied ; “ Hartorff snatched up the babe, I followed ; our party dispersed, for our opponents were

so obstinate in their defence, that we were compelled to abandon the anticipated booty. Why, I know not, unless 'twas Providence, but unseen by him, I kept close upon his foot-steps ; the night though warm, was dark ; we had gained a steep crag, and before I could stay his arm, the innocent he carried was dropped down the precipice ! Ah ! ha !' roared Hartorff, ' there goes the proud Mansfeldt's heir; Count, thou wouldest freely give thrice the sum of gold of which I robbed thee, were I to bring that bantling back ! Hartorff is revenged for his prison discipline.' I slunk from the villain, and concealing myself behind one of the crags, cursed the hour in which I had doomed myself to companionship with such a crew. I passed the night on the same spot, stricken by remorse, and at the first glimmer of day, was leaning over the precipice. About twenty feet below me lay the child, whose barbarous sacrifice I had witnessed. I fancied it

moved, for scarcely a breeze passed over the mountain : a faint hope that the mantle in which it was enveloped might have broken its fall began to dawn upon me ; what a mercy that the saving mantle had prevented it from struggling and rolling over into the abyss beneath ! At the hazard of my life, for one false step would have precipitated me to the bottom, I swung myself down on the narrow ledge, and found the child unhurt ; I tied it in the mantle, and slung it on my back. With infinite labour and my dagger, I scraped as far as I could reach, some shallow steps. I was young, slight, and had spent my days chiefly among the steeps and crags : by the aid of the projecting rocks and stunted bushes, I gained the top, sank on my knees, and registered a vow to Heaven to quit the savages with whom for months I had herded. I resumed my cloak which I had thrown aside before I descended, concealed my charge under it, buckled on

my sword, and then reflected how to dispose of him and escape myself. Soon after daylight, I reached the valley; after many weary miles I met you on the way to your monastery, and delivered him to your charge. My oath, my fearful oath sealed my lips to you, but the child was safe; I traversed leagues, and finally devoted myself to the holy calling, in the exercise of which you find me; thank Heaven my hands and soul are not stained with the blood of my fellow creatures."

The Father sat with his hands crossed over his breast, and eyes fixed in mute attention upon the speaker. He almost reproached himself to find how large a portion of his thoughts were engaged in the affairs of this world, and vainly tried to repress the tide of circulating human affections which were bounding and swelling in his heart. Perhaps he felt that in severing himself from every natural tie, he had un-

dertaken a task which was presumptuous, because neither attainable by him after years of self-discipline, nor commanded by his Creator.

As Jerome concluded, Augustine arose, and paced the yard with unequal steps. He tried to curb the exhibition of his joy, that the Friar might not witness his frailty, and condemn his weakness. The object of many a tedious wandering was attained, the noble and sensitive minded Otho would no longer shrink under the mortification of a doubtful birth. Turning to Jerome abruptly, he demanded—

“ By your sacrilegious oath, Friar, was confession denied to you ?”

“ It was, Father ; for those who administered the detestable pledge were scoffers and unbelievers.”

“ Did you know anything of the house to which the child belonged ?”

“ Till that hour,” replied the Friar, “ I never heard the name, nor probably should

have remembered it, but for the deed coupled with it. At Magdeburg I found Count Mansfeldt much spoken of; but I dared not make inquiries sufficiently direct to ascertain whether he was related to the infant I had saved. Could I have done so without hazarding the violation of my oath, I would have sought some means to apprise him of his existence."

This Augustine did not doubt was true; for although he had heard the Count had lost a son in infancy, he never learned the manner of his death.

"This day, Jerome, you will rejoice that one spot was still unsullied in your heart; you will kneel in humble thankfulness that the All-ruling Power watched over you, to whisper a remembrance of His word. You have sinned, but have repented, and Heaven will send peace to your soul."

Augustine ceased; then beckoning to Hendrick, who during their conference had

been talking with the jailer, added—"Follow me!"

"My good Hendrick, hasten forward, seek the Count, and beg him to request for me an audience with the Elector before he departs. My business is urgent—I must have speech with him."

"His Highness is at hand," replied Hendrick; "look, even now I see some of his attendants turn the corner; it is Count Mansfeldt himself."

They were then opposite the residence occupied by Mansfeldt's family and Clotilda: the Father moved a few paces forward to meet the Elector, then waited till he came up. Mansfeldt, Heideck, Otho, and some officers were with him.

"Why, Father," said Maurice, good-humouredly, at the same time checking his horse, "your countenance partakes of the brightness of this gay May morning. By my life, you have seen some service with

our army, and I am told bore yourself as bravely as the best steel-clad knight of us all. I am well pleased we are met, for I was about to send a messenger to you: I must forthwith to Passau, and would gladly find you there, if in this you can oblige me."

"Most willingly, your Highness; I was on my way to crave a private audience."

"I trust not a very long one, Father."

"One which I am sure you will not deny, since it concerns those in whom you take much interest."

"No new mischance to my ward, I trust, Father?"

"Far otherwise, your Highness."

"Well," said Maurice, turning to Mansfeldt, "as the Father is so urgent, as good news keeps few holidays, and as time presses, with your permission, for these good reasons, we will make a council-room of one of your vacant chambers."

Mansfeldt and Otho dismounted, and

ushered the Elector into the house, Augustine and the Friar following.

“Do not disturb your lady, Mansfeldt; any chamber will suit the purpose.”

“In truth, your Highness,” replied Mansfeldt, “our temporary abode is a place of poor reception for you;” at the same time throwing open the door of a small waiting hall near the entrance.

“And now, good Father,” said the Elector, “what is this matter which you seem to have so much at heart?”

Augustine, who saw the Duke’s impatience, related succinctly the main facts of the foregoing pages. “And here,” he added, is the Friar Jerome, the living witness, and chief actor in the affair.”

“Wonderful!” observed the Elector; “your communication, indeed, is well worth some delay. A word with you alone;” leading the way to the further end of the hall. “How know you, Father, that this tale is

true, or that the child delivered to you may have been Mansfeldt's? Have you any mark by which to identify him?"

"None," replied the Father, disappointedly, "but the man's haste and beseeching entreaty to me to receive the child, his robber dress, his life for years past of holiness and useful service to his fellow-creatures, induce me to believe that he would not frame such a useless falsehood. I have no doubt that he did save the boy."

"Truly, I hope it is so," returned Maurice; but we must question Mansfeldt as to the manner of his infant's supposed death: seek him, good Father. I should be grieved," thought Maurice, "if that good man's vision of happiness for those in whom he truly says I take concern, should pass away, and leave the page of hope a blank. It is a wild story, but not more strange than that of my fair ward. What frolic freaks of fortune occur to some of us! how curiously have

these bad men's actions ruled and been interwoven in the destiny of others."

Mansfeldt found Maurice musing, and unconscious of his presence till close to him.

"So, Mansfeldt, the Father tells me that the criminal we sent forward with such care and diligence, has by his death escaped our justice. Know you anything of his early life?"

The Count was surprised, and wondered what motive could impel the Elector to take an interest in the former career of such a reprobate.

"No truly, your Highness, to my knowledge I never heard of the fellow, but as connected with Reiterstein, nor ever saw him."

"Never, Count?"

"Never."

"Do you," still questioned Maurice, "remember some twenty four years since committing a man to prison for robbing you?"

"I was so robbed," returned Mansfeldt, "by a fellow in whom I placed some confidence at the time you mention, and punished him more for his perfidy, than for the loss of that which he stole from me, although the sum was considerable."

"Was he a German?"

"He was."

"Where did this happen? and what became of him?"

"It occurred in Italy, I have never heard of him since."

"You were attacked soon after in the mountains by banditti I think, and beat the robbers off?"

"And lost my infant, Duke, my poor Volrate. Oh! it was a grievous affliction!"

The tremulous movement of his lips, and thick voice proved that this passage in the Count's life was one of sad remembrance to him.

"Pardon these questions," said Maurice

with feeling, laying his hand on the Count's shoulder, "I do not idly probe that wound which years have failed to heal ; my purpose must excuse them to you ; was your child slain ?"

" No, we never knew what became of him. Fractious from the long journey, to amuse and soothe him we had him removed into the carriage with his nurse ; some of our attendants brought up the rear. It was on these the robbers made their first attack. When they found we were too many for them, they dispersed and fled. Our first thought was for our child ; we had little apprehension, as we supposed they had neither time for plunder, nor would they seek it in the humbler vehicle, but alas ! we found the carriage which bore our treasure upset, his nurse dead a few paces beyond, and our darling gone. The night was dark, we sent for farther help, every search was made ; with a strong force, we explored every

cavern, and thus for days we kept the mountains, but he was lost to us! My poor Isabella! never shall I forget her anguish when she heard of the ill-success of all our efforts. Year after year we revisited Italy, and still again her heart is set upon the journey, although now she never alludes to our poor boy."

"Count Mansfeldt, Hartorff was the man who robbed you; Hartorff was the man who planned the attack to steal your son for revenge; Reiterstein conducted it for plunder."

"Did he declare this?" said Mansfeldt, much agitated; "did he say how he disposed of the infant?"

"Count, it was not remorse which drew this confession from him. I will not detain you now by detailing his fell purpose, but tell you that among those desperate ruffians there was one new to crime, who tracked the wretch's steps."

“And did he save him Duke, did he save him?”

“He did, and from himself you shall hear the tale of which I confess I entertained some doubts, until I obtained your corroboration.”

“My boy still lives!”

“He does, your joy will have no drawback; he is a son you may be proud to call so: thanks to good Father Augustine, perfect in all accomplishments of grace, goodness, and knighthood—as well you know yourself.”

“Otho!” cried Mansfeldt trembling with eager agitation.

“Even so Count.”

“Now Father, will you prepare the Countess and Sir Otho for this unexpected event, for I wish to rejoice with them, and I think my good friend here is hardly steady enough to carry his load of joy without stumbling, and letting it fall at the threshold. Jerome,

advance; doubtless the Count will wish to speak his gratitude to the author of his son's preservation."

"No thanks, no thanks, good Count," said the friar meekly, "I have long been overpaid; but for thy child, I might have died an impenitent bandit upon the scaffold; the remembrance of his helpless innocence fed me when hunger gnawed and want enfeebled me, comforted me when remorse preyed upon me, warmed me when cold pinched me, and my only shelter and covering was the rugged rock, or the drifted snow; it healed me when sickness assailed me, and but for that blessed green and cherished spot, when all beside that memory could recal was dark, and dank, and cheerless, I should have trembled at the thought of death."

"But you anticipated none of these benefits, friar, when you saved my doomed boy ?

when the expiring lamp of virtue led you to encounter danger for his sake?" said Mansfeldt consolingly; "you have brought gladness to my house, the blessed deed exceeds my inadequate eloquence, but the consolation you say you have derived, will assist my poverty of expression—now, with his Highness's permission, we will follow the Father, and wait his summons in the ante-room: I almost fear that this excess of joy will be too much for my beloved Isabella."

Augustine found Otho with his wife, and we may now say with his mother and sister; he told him he now hoped from a declaration which had escaped Hartorff on his death bed, that he had at last found a clue to his parentage.

Otho started to his feet, caught with energy the hand of his protector, but could not speak. Why did he pause? why did he look with apprehension so wistfully in the

face of his benefactor ? The great, first longing of his heart was about to be gratified ; the intelligence so long sought, so ardently desired was brought, and yet he shrank from the knowledge offered.

“Hartorff ? Hartorff ? What,” he thought, “if I should be the degraded offspring of that villain, or some outcast as criminal ? better to live on doubt, and feed on hope, better be carried a nameless knight to the grave, than to transmit such disgraceful knowledge to my posterity.”

Augustine comprehended why he stood thus transfixed and joyless, while the crimson tide rushed to his temples, then ebbed, and left him cold and pale.

The Father read on his contracted brow the conjured spectres of his mind, and exclaimed in haste :

“Fear not, my son, your lineage is true, and worthy of yourself.”

The Countess sat in breathless suspense.  
Had the instinct warning of her heart  
foundation ?

Otho clasped his wife to his bosom.  
“ Now, Clotilda, I may proudly call you  
mine, and feel that you are not a sacrifice  
to my selfish love.”

“ Otho, you will not, for you cannot, be  
more dear to me. You were my own, my  
all, and like a very miser I grant, I was  
more than satisfied it should be so.”

“ But who is he ?” cried the Countess ; “ of  
what country ? speak, good Father ! speak !”

Augustine, with as much calmness as he  
could assume, answered,—

“ Of German origin, lady, but the Elector  
and Count Mansfeldt are on their way to  
join us, with one who can clear all doubts :”  
and he looked towards the Countess, who  
sat, scarcely daring to draw the breath which  
laboured in her bosom, lest its inspiration

should dispel the illusions which were flitting, like airy phantoms, through her mind. The Father's composed manner as he moved to the door, to admit those whose coming he had announced, recalled, as he intended it should, the Countess's self-possession, and half extinguished the fitful gleams which shone upon these hopeful fancies.

"Sir Otho," said the Elector, "we have brought you a witness to confirm the Father's tidings, if any affirmation besides that of your reverend protector be necessary. My fair ward, shall you be content to see your knight ennobled?"

"I was content before, your Highness, more so I cannot be, however exalted his rank; otherwise I can never be, while I hold my present place in his heart; but inasmuch as he will be happier, so shall I rejoice with him, and for him, and be glad in the reflection of his content."

"Upon my life, Mansfeldt," said the Elec-

tor, “if you had a son, I should wish him such a wife as my fair ward.”

“We have no son,” said the Countess with a deep sigh.

“So Mansfeldt has been lamenting to me, as well as the manner of his loss; but who can say, after the wonderful restoration of Sir Otho to those parents who had abandoned all hope of his preservation, that you may not be blessed by the possession of one like him.”

“Oh! would that heaven would grant it so,” sobbed the Countess, while tears beyond her control fell fast.

“I trust,” said Maurice, “and still believe, that your prayer will be granted; we should always hope, if it be not irrational to do so. If it were not for offence to your brave young nephew Henry, I would intreat your adoption of my gallant knight, till those from whom he was so violently abstracted, shall claim him. The Count does

not look averse to the proposal, and the good Father seems half inclined to abandon the charge, which by accident devolved upon him. How long, Father, have you held your guardianship, for my memory fails?"

"For nearly twenty-four years," replied Augustine.

"Oh! tell me, your Highness, tell me," cried the Countess, "what means all this?"

"Only this, lady," replied the Elector, "that I think Sir Otho in courtesy should embrace the parents and sister I have provided for him, till he can find others more to his liking, which I do not think he will seek to do."

Maurice's looks, Mansfeldt's, Augustine's looks, as the Countess and Mathilda examined their gladsome faces, told more than words; indeed for some minutes none were spoken, while Otho was clasped in his mother's arms.

The Elector walked about the room, carried the young child to the window, found the prospect which he pointed out to him a misty landscape, and passed his hands across his eyes.

## CHAPTER XII.

JEROME's deep tones first broke the silence ; he had thrown himself upon his knees, his sunken cheeks and uplifted eyes were radiant with satisfaction. "This is the first hour of happiness I have known since my boyhood ; but oh ! my Father, the work is thine, not mine. Thou didst make the sinner the humble instrument of Thy will to redeem him from his sin, Thy Holy Name be praised ! "

Maurice took the hands of the Countess

within his own. “I told Mansfeldt that I must rejoice with you, dear Lady, and truly I have done so; there is much I have yet to learn, which the good Father must gossip to me at Passau, for my haste forced him into a brevity, which, had I known the object of his conference, I should have sacrificed to a scene which falls rarely to the lot of princes to witness. Mansfeldt, in our accommodation, your interests shall not be forgotten; for the present I must dispense with the services of both father and son. Farewell;” then blithely added, “we shall meet at Passau.”

When the Duke had taken his departure, Mansfeldt observed, “Our joy, my Isabella, has made us heedless of others; Volrate, our nephew Henry must share our happiness.”

“I come to supplant him, my father, and methinks I am not the person to tell him this must be.”

"He will receive the news with joy," said Mathilda.

And so he did, for when Augustine went to seek him, and impart the occurrences of the morning, he insisted upon joining the family group.

"Hurrah!" he cried, as he entered the room, supported by the miller and Ludwig, "by my faith, Sir Otho, I thought the nameless knight would find a noble lineage, right glad I am our house can claim you; our name will never sink while we have your arm to prop it. My kind aunt will now I trust learn to smile."

If Henry's pardon had been doubtful before, his generous hearted disinterestedness towards his new-found cousin would have sealed it with Mathilda. Ludwig, when he had assisted the invalid in his removal, ran to his father with the intelligence, and without ceremony interrupted the adieu which were passing between Konrad and Thu-

melda. Never did the Elector's service before appear irksome to Konrad, who might not delay to hear how all this had happened, but must content himself with knowing that it was so. Heideck lingered a few moments, as he rode through the town, to offer his congratulations. Jerome's narrative was repeated to his attentive audience.

Mathilda feared that the relation would be too much for her mother, but she saw the long-lost one before her, and although powerfully affected, she struggled against any exhibition of her feelings.

"It seems marvellous," she observed, "how Jerome could have escaped the Count's people, who were dispersed in every direction for so many days."

"Not so," said the friar, "you sought among the rocks and mountains, which it was my object to abandon as quickly as possible. I swung myself from crag to crag, where I could do so with safety to my

charge, and most likely reached the valley before you had gathered in sufficient numbers to commence your search. For some miles, fearing pursuit from my vagabond comrades, I never relaxed my speed, except to procure some goat's milk for the infant, but I suppose they believed I had fallen in the fray."

When the friar paused, Augustine took up the tale.

"When Lewis, the father of the lady Clotilda, left Reiterstein with the Baron Rodolph and Krantz for the wars, I went back to my monastery, promising that I would join them after their return; at the period I encountered Jerome, the time was approaching for me to do so. When he left me, I sat down to think how I could dispose of his unsolicited gift, for it was a responsibility which required debate; after some reflection, I concluded upon consulting with our good prior, and we agreed to place the boy

with some worthy and decent peasants in the neighbourhood of the monastery. Shortly after, I journeyed once more to Reiterstein, but arrived in time only to attend the death bed of the good Baron. Lewis lost his son, his wife was taken from him; and broken-hearted, he sunk himself into an early grave. Lady Clotilda's abduction and my pursuit of her, followed. When I revisited my monastery, I found that my young charge had been well taken care of; he was hardy, tall, and acute for his age, but wild as a mountain fawn. I removed him into our holy asylum, and devoted all my leisure hours to his instruction. I was fond of the boy, and loved to have him with me; this attachment aided, and finally induced me to yield to his entreaties, that he should become the companion of my travels. I wished him to acquire some knowledge of the world, and judge for himself before he entered the cloister, although I never doubted

that he would ultimately embrace a religious life when of age to do so ; but as he grew to maturity, and could form his own opinions, I found his distaste to taking the monastic vows unconquerable.

“ ‘Oh ! give me a sword, Father,’ he would say, when I urged him on this point, ‘but not a cowl.’

“ When my duties called me to Walsrode, he was with me, and thus in boyhood had opportunities of associating with the precious charge which Reiterstein had deposited with the good abbess. My adopted son became eager to carve a fortune for himself; his desire was to take service with Duke Maurice, for we were at that time in Germany. As I had resigned my patrimony to my younger brother, he willingly advanced me funds for the equipment of my young soldier to whom, before he quitted me, I narrated the extraordinary chance which had thrown him on my protection, and how

ineffectual all my researches had been to discover his parents. I could not suppose him to be of low degree, from the texture of his clothes when delivered to me.

“ The Duke soon distinguished him ; his bravery at the battle of Smalkalde, though but a youth, won for him his knighthood. Sometime after that sad conflict, he joined me at Halberstadt, and again we visited Walsrode. Short as their interviews were, they decided the fate of our beloved charges.

“ Otho, who never concealed a thought from me, declared that their boyish and girlish regard had ripened into love. I greatly feared the Abbess’s displeasure and opposition, but in these suppositions I erred.

“ ‘ Their union,’ she said, ‘ is the only hope of saving Clotilda from the pursuit of the Baron Von Reiterstein, unless she were to take the vows, and how can I persuade her to do this while her soul is fixed upon an earthly object ? Will an unwilling votary,

imbued with worldly affections, be an acceptable sacrifice at the altar.'

"There appeared to be no alternative, and under our sanction they were united.

"We took leave of the excellent abbess, and remained for a time at Hildesheim, where Lewis was born. The flame of war was again lighted, and the Elector called upon my young hero for his service. As a mediator, to accommodate, if possible, the unhappy differences existing between Christian brethren, and spare the further effusion of blood, I had at different times held communication with His Highness. During one of these interviews, I implored his kindness for my ward, made him acquainted with her history, and assured him, that if Reiterstein should return during her husband's absence, the strong arm of power alone could insure the restitution of her estates, and provide for her safety. He promised to protect her, and also to dispossess the Baron

as soon as the siege of Magdeburg should be concluded, and lamented that he had engaged him to join him. The skirmish at Ottersleben, to which neighbourhood we had followed the army, rendered Otho a prisoner, while Reiterstein was expected each moment to arrive at the camp. The Elector generously placed ample funds at my disposal, so that happily means were not wanting. With the events which followed, you are well acquainted."

Future plans were now discussed; their final arrangements must be concluded at Passau; but Clotilda made the Count and Countess promise to accompany them to Reiterstein, to which place the miller, with Ludwig and Schramm, undertook to precede them, make everything ready for their reception, and to dismiss, with the exception of Brandt and the taciturn Leech, all the Baron's retainers, substituting for them some of Volrate's most attached followers.

They would not hear of Jerome's quitting them.

With the Baron died the last male heir of the house of Reiterstein : the fief was granted to Volrate and his heirs.

After a few days spent at Passau, to enable the Father to journey with them, they took their departure. Affection, gratitude, and regret, mingled in their last audience with the Elector. Konrad requested a short leave of absence, which was readily granted.

As the gray towers of Reiterstein broke on their view, Clotilda recalled all the sufferings she had endured within their walls. As her birth-place, she could not remember it ; as her prison, fearful recollections alone were associated with its stern and elevated battlements ; but these fearful musings were no longer indulged in, when those who had preceded them, with the faithful Schultz and the now happy Theresa, came forth to bid

them welcome, and she presented her beloved Volrate as the Lord of Reiterstein.

Schultz could hardly believe that all this was real; while fulfilling his former office to the travellers, he dreaded each moment to see the dark Baron stalk in and dispel the illusion. Before Clotilda laid her head upon her pillow, accompanied by Volrate and the Friar Jerome, she bent her steps to the chapel, which had not been opened since the night of her rescue. In all humility she knelt at the altar in fervent prayer, devoutly to render thanks to that All-protecting Power, who had watched over, directed, and guided her.

Konrad, who had spent the evening of his arrival with his parents, was at the Castle on the following morning. The Elector had ordered him to deliver a packet, the contents of which had been found on the Baron's person. Within were memoranda of no value, but it contained also a key, which was securely fastened to a strong chain,

composed of small iron links : it was doubtless a master-key ; no one was so likely to give information upon the subject as Ludwig, but it puzzled his sagacity to discover its use.

"Why, Ludwig," said Konrad, "I thought you were in all the Baron's secrets?"

"If I had not been let into some of them," he replied rather pettishly, "Mistress Thumelda and yourself might not feel so comfortable as you now do."

"True, my good friend, and Thumelda and myself are truly grateful to you ; you are the last man I ought to annoy, or would offend by an idle jest, but I really believe what I say ; if you cannot find the lock which this key will fit, I know not who can."

Some thought seemed suddenly to pass through Ludwig's mind, for he darted off.

The party were strolling round the ramparts when he rejoined them. He seemed

half disappointed, but beckoned to the Father, and they retired together.

“ By Ludwig’s manner,” said Volrate, “ I should judge he has made at least half a discovery, and he is not the man to rest till the other half makes a whole; but if we keep sentry here till he returns, night may surprise us on our posts.”

Poor old Hilda, with the help of her son’s arm, and her stout staff before mentioned in our story as her favoured assistant, had crawled up to welcome the dear young lady.

“ Ah ! Hilda,” said Krantz, “ you have not brought a cold welcome to the revival of old times and our young lady, I’ll be bound, but tired enough I dare say.”

“ Oh ! for the matter of that, I believe I could have gone double the distance; but can I see her, Krantz ? is she kind ? will she look proudly on a poor old woman ?” she replied with tremulous eagerness.

“Judge for yourself, Hilda, for there she is ; we will follow her into the hall, where you can rest, and speak to the proud lady ;” but Hilda was still timid and doubtful, and screened herself behind the miller and her son.

“Ah ! my good friend Krantz, what news do you bring ? have you given notice that the Castle gates will be open to-morrow, and the tables plenished, for all who come to welcome us and our young heir ? and mind, Krantz, you must manage to bring old Hilda,” said our heroine with a manner and voice so blithe and gladsome, that the miller could hardly believe it was the sober and sad Clotilda.

“I have done as you desired, Lady ; and do not apprehend that there will be any lack of guests to profit by your hospitality ; as for Hilda,” dragging her forth, “you see she has not waited for my bidding, and now seems frightened at her boldness.”

"Hilda, indeed!" said the happy heroine, making her take a seat beside her, "you do not perhaps know how faithfully those most dear to you have served me, but we will tell you all this some day, and then you will learn how glad I must be to see you; and here, look at our dear boy."

Hilda did look, and wondered whether there could be anything so good and beautiful in the world as their restored lady, so lovely as her young heir, or so gracious and handsome as her husband, who came up and spoke so kindly to her.

"But you are tired," said Clotilda; "Schramm, pray give your mother some refreshment, and let her rest; here comes Ludwig, and the good Father with him, they seem fraught with news."

"And so we are, lady, I fancy we shall find a lock that will own our key, but at present it is partly guess."

"Come with us, my children," said Augustine, "by Ludwig's account, this vener-

able stronghold has been of late converted into a den of thieves, and a receptacle for plunder."

The four then proceeded to the Baron's favorite room, to which we introduced our readers in a former chapter. There stood the cabinet, the key was applied, and fitted. Within was the book in which was noted down an inventory of valuables, and the account of an enormous sum of money in hand.

Ludwig next drew forth a bunch of keys.

"Verily, Ludwig," observed Volrate, "we must bow to your abilities, you are second only to Columbus; and I trust, if this book be not a tale of fiction, it will afford us a clue to a mine of wealth: the Baron seems to have been a sapt at calculation, as at accumulation."

"Doubtless," replied Ludwig, "I shall find a mine, if I can discover the right spot where to dig for it."

“Oh! deep underground I trow, my good fellow.”

“I suspect so,” said the soldier examining the keys, and trying those most likely, in the lock of the small door till one fitted.

“If we are to work underground, we shall require some light, I should have thought of this before;” and Ludwig again started off in search of a lamp.

There were a few relics and trifles of curious workmanship in the cabinet; these underwent an examination during Ludwig’s absence.

We will not lead our readers again through these well known desolate chambers; they reached the vault which was now nearly cleared of its former incumbrances, save a few rusty weapons with some black and white masks.

“These look as if the Baron had kept carnival in the Castle,” observed Ludwig; “I suspect they are the mortal remains of

the demons who frightened the population of Kemnitz into a belief in spirits, and out of their own.” He now carefully applied his lamp to the walls, and sounded them as he went round.

“I have it,” he cried, “and have sprung the mine. Now for my small iron master, again, to unlock the Baron’s bosom’s secrets. Why here,” he continued, as he opened the door of the precious hoard, which sprung back, “is a goodly array of cups, tankards, and goblets, enough to furnish a regiment with vessels for their liquor. Good Father, it will require more than the labour of three men to work this mine; we must have the assistance of Krantz and Konrad, and if I am not mistaken, we need not go back for them.”

The keys were quickly applied to another door, which by a narrow passage led to one which opened on the ramparts. Ludwig

sprang through it, and soon returned with his fellow labourers.

“Now,” he said, “as there are a good many idlers about, we had better, with your leave, return with our load as we came.”

All the money and valuables were soon removed to the room they had quitted.

“How could he collect all these things?” asked Volrate.

“In a great measure by robbery,” answered Augustine, “with twenty years of proceeds from your wife’s inheritance.”

“But how came you to suspect the place of deposit for this treasure, Ludwig?” demanded Clotilda.

“Why, Lady, I always knew the Baron was not scrupulous as to the manner in which he opened the purse strings of others, that he received full pay for his mercenaries, and spent little besides; this accounts for his hidden hoard; as to its situation, that is the discovery of to-day. It flashed upon

my memory while talking with you, that on one occasion, after the Baron had dismissed me, I returned before I had gone many paces for some trifling order, about which I had forgotten to ask : I found the room empty, the door we have just passed through was the only exit by which he could have quitted the room. When I was seeking to find the inlet which must have been used by the Father, when he entered the chapel without the knowledge of any one, I first observed the small door on the ramparts, which at the time, as it could not have been the way by which the Father got in, I concluded led to the cellars. I further remarked, that on that side of the building, from the form of the newer stone, some windows had been blocked up, and buttresses built partly against them ; these on closer inspection some hours since, I judged, in which opinion the Father confirmed, me must belong to apartments in connection with the

Baron's room, which otherwise seemed to possess no particular advantage to give it so great a preference with him. The cabinet I had often noticed for its curious and ancient carving; then, when he was ill, it was impossible to remove the chain which he always wore. You will observe that it is fastened with a peculiar spring, it would not admit of being passed over the head, so that room, key and cabinet, were combined in my mind."

"Those windows," now interrupted the Father, "lighted the rooms much occupied by the family in happier days. Lewis after the death of his wife, had them shut up, and the windows and doors filled in strengthening the walls by buttresses; the Baron knew this, and turned poor Lewis's mournful fancy to his own account; this door has been recently opened."

"The good citizens of Kemnitz," said Volrate, "must send an inventory of

their stolen cups and tankards, that we may make restitution of them, as well as their other losses ; I fancy Schultz can identify some of the property, for he was bemoaning the disappearance of it to day ; the Baron seems to have been very careful of your goods my Clotilda, the greater part of the money must be yours,"

" And a tolerable portion too," cried Ludwid.

" Mine, really ?"

" Yes, truly, who can claim it but yourself, my wife ?"

" Oh ! Volrate, I am so glad, so very glad."

" You seem so overjoyed at the possession of this treasure, my Clotilda, that I shall begin to suspect you of miserly propensities."

" You are right Volrate, for here are the means to make those happy imme-

dately, who have done so much for us, and a portion can well be awarded also to our dear and generous Mathilda."

Volrate embraced his wife.

Their honest and kind intents were fulfilled. Within a week, and on the same day, the good pastor joined the hands of Henry of Mansfeldt and his cousin, also those of his son Konrad and Thumelda. Schramm and Hilda took possession of their former dwelling; they were surrounded by more comforts than they had ever known before. The miller's house and domain were enlarged, and freed henceforth from all tribute; but he said the mill must still go round, for its hum was music to him. Ludwig was made captain of the guard, was nurse, playfellow, or any thing it suited his fancy to be; he found favour in the eyes of the pretty Hedwig. Jerome, assisted the Leech and devoted himself to the poor and sick, Augustine

to the young heir. The halls of Reiterstein became again what they once were, with the addition of sundry small and merry voices, whose joyous tones scared away the gloom of the old walls, and rang through those long and deserted chambers, once more restored to their former cheerfulness and habitable appearance. The good abbess had the happiness of embracing her she had so carefully reared from early childhood, and to whose felicity she had so essentially contributed. Philip Krantz returned to his parents, and ultimately succeeded the good pastor. Within a few weeks after these transactions, they had to lament the early death of the brave but reckless George of Mecklenburg, who fell by a cannon shot before the walls of Frankfort. Konrad and his wife left Reiterstein immediately after their marriage; they returned from Friburg in little more than a year, he a wealthy man, but truly a mourning and a sorrowing one.

his home was Hendrick's; their duty and their service, alas! were no longer needed by THE HERO OF GERMANY, DUKE MAURICE, the ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

## N O T E S.

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### PAGE 4.

WHEN they had thus spoken, they presented to him the letters of Ferdinand, King of the Romans, Albert, Duke of Bavaria, and the brothers of Lunenburg, in favour of the Landgrave. Now the princes who interceded by ambassadors were Ferdinand, the Elector of Palatine, Wolfgang, Duke of Deux-ponts, John, Marquis of Brandenburg, Henry and John Albert, Dukes of Meckleburg, Ernest, Marquis of Baden, and Christopher, Duke of Wurtemburg.—*Sleidan*, book xxiii. p. 533.

Letters were also delivered in favour of the Landgrave from the King of Denmark.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. p. 63; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 841.

## PAGE 8.

Le Landgrave se fiant à la parole de l'Electeur de Brandebourg, et du Duc Maurice, se mit en chemin pour se rendre à Hall. Il y entra le dix huitième de juin au soir, au milieu de ces deux Princes, qui étoient allés le prendre à Naumbourg pour l'amener à la Cour de l'Empereur. Il prit son logement dans l'hôtel de Maurice de Saxe sou Genre.—*P Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 748.

Le Landgrave, qui croyoit en être quitte, rendit graces à l'Empereur avec un air de confiance ; et comme on le laisseoit trop long tems à genoux, il se releva de lui même sans en attendre la permission de l'Empereur, vers lequel il s'avanea comme pour lui parler et lui donner lu main ; mais, l'Electeur de Brandebourg, qui s'aperçut que cette démarche déplaisoit à l'Empereur, se mit adroitemment entre eux deux, et dit au Landgrave, qu'ils souperoient ensemble chez le Duc d'Albe avec le Duc Maurice ; il est certain cependant que ni l'Electeur de Brandebourg ni le Duc Maurice n'eurent alors aucun soupçon du dessein de l'Empereur.—*De Thou*, tome i. livre iv. p. 265 ; *Barre*, tome viii. p. 753.

Le Landgrave outré de la condutie qu'on enoit

à son égard, réclama long tems la foi qui lui avoit été donnée, et sur laquelle il étoit venu trouver l'Empereur—il ne cessa de demander à ses gendres la satisfaction qu'ils lui devoient, et de leurs rappeler les promesses qu'ils avoient faites à sa femme et à ses enfans, &c., &c.

Le Lendemain, Maurice et l'Electeur de Brandebourg portèrent leurs plaintes à l'Empereur—ils lui remontrèrent vivement que leur gloire étoit intéressée dans la cause du Landgrave.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 753, à Paris.

L'Empereur avoit employé vainement. La Lire pour rétirer des mains du Landgrave la promesse des Electeurs, qu'il avoit encore sollicité nouvellement de degager leur parole. Il chargea donc Schwendi d'aller trouver les enfans et les ministres du Landgrave, et de leur ordonner de sa part, non seulement de s'abstenir de faire assigner les deux Electeurs, mais encore de lui remettre la promesse par écrit qu'ils avoient faits au Landgrave, et de se déporter de leur action. Il les menaçoit des plus grands peines, s'ils refussoient d'obéir. N'ayant pu rien obtenir, il prit enfin le parti d'annuler la promesse des Electeurs, et de les déclarer quittes de tout engagement envers le Landgrave.—*De Thou*, tome i livre vi. p. 439.

## PAGE 70.

C'est pour cela que toutes les troupes qui avoient été occupées, tant à l'attaque qu'à la défense de Magdebourg avoient été mises en garnison dans la Thuringe, et dans les lieux voisins, où elles ravageoient les terres de l'Electeurs de Mayence et de quelques autres princes ecclésiastiques.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 843.

## PAGE 72.

Granvelle, Bishop of Arras, his prime minister, though one of the most subtle statesmen of that, or perhaps any age, was on this occasion the dupe of his own craft. He entertained such a high opinion of his own abilities, and held the political talents of the Germans in such contempt, that he despised all the intimations given him concerning Maurice's secret machinations, or the dangerous designs which he was carrying on. When the Duke of Alva, whose dark suspicious mind harboured many doubts concerning the Elector's sincerity, proposed calling him immediately to court to answer for his conduct, Granvelle replied with great scorn, that these apprehensions were groundless, and that a drunken German head was too gross to form any scheme which he could not penetrate and baffle. Nor did he assume this peremptory tone merely from confidence in his own discernment ; he had bribed two

of Maurice's ministers, and received from them frequent and minute information concerning all their masters' motions.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. p. 68.

## PAGE 133.

Charles quint paroisoit alors absolument dominé par Gonzague et Granvelle Evêque d'Arras, &c.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 843.

## PAGE 138.

Nevertheless Duke Maurice comforting them underhand, told them, that he would venture not only all his fortunes, but life and blood also, for their father's freedom, and that then it would be a fit time to surrender body for body when the state of affairs should be such that the displeasure of some men needed not so much to be feared.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 505.

## PAGE 141.

At this time died the Landgrave's wife and Duke Maurice's mother-in-law, being heart-broken with sorrow and care for her husband's imprisonment and many other calamities she had suffered.—*Sleidan*, book xxi. p. 485.

## PAGE 143.

Then, replied Prince William, that was a doubtful and uncertain answer: nor did he see, what it was they could expect: that in the meantime his father

was in a sad condition, pining away in grief in a nasty and loathsome prison : that he could not but concern himself for him, both in duty, and upon the account of promise : that he should therefore endeavour to get him a plain and definite answer, and that within a time too, or else that he and the Elector of Brandenburg must not take it ill, if they were cited, and made to fulfil their obligation.—*Sleidan*, book xxiii. p. 534.

## PAGE 144.

Maurice fit réponse que ses alliés et lui n'avoient jamais manqué d'affection pour l'Empereur.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 876.

## PAGE 145.

Cependant le Prince Guillaume fils aîné du Landgrave, vint trouver l'Electeur Maurice—Il lui dit, que comme son devoir l'obligeoit à tout entreprendre pour secourir son père, il le prioit de lui faire au plutôt une réponse nette et précise ; et s'il y manquoit, de ne pas trouver mauvais qu'il intentât une action contre lui et l'Electeur Joachim de Brandebourg. Maurice repondit, que l'Empereur vouloit conférer avec lui : Qu'il étoit prêt de partir pour aller le trouver, quoique dans la situation où étoient les choses, il eût de la peine à sortir de ses Etats : que néanmoins cette affaire le touchoit si

fort, que, sans avoir égard au danger auquel il s'espoisoit, il étoit résolu de la faire terminer. Le Prince Guillaume ayant prié l'Electeur de bien réfléchir s'il étoit à propos d'entreprendre ce voyage, Maurice fit venir quelques uns de ses conseillers, à qui il avoit confié son secret, et leur dit en présence de Guillaume, qu'il persistoit dans le même *dessein*; mais par ce *dessein* qu'il n'expliquoit pas, il n'entendoit que celui de faire la guerre à l'Empereur, dès qu'il se presenteroit un tems favorable pour la commencer.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, partie ii. p. 843.

## PAGE 164.

The princes and high nobles used to travel with from sixty to one hundred and fifty servants in their retinue.—*Muller's Annals*.

## PAGE 219.

Duke Maurice had taken into his service Count Heideck, who was outlawed by the Emperor, and made him Governour of Leipsic. He, for the love he had to the reformed religion, and the hatred he bore the Emperor, wished well to the Magdeburgers, and was a counsellor to peace, that when that war was over, Duke Maurice might attempt greater matters.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 514.

## PAGE 223.

In the meantime the soldiers, as well those who had besieged Magdeburg as the garrison that held

out the city, had their winter quarters in Mulhausen and the places thereabouts, and did much damage to those of Northhausen and Erfort. When the Emperor demanded the reason of this from Duke Maurice, who had the chief command in the war, he was answered that the outrages they committed were for the want of their pay.—*Sleiden*, book xxiv. p. 549; *Robertson*, vol. iv. p. 66; *P. Barre*, tome viii. part. ii. p. 847.

## PAGE 229.

Augustus, brother to Maurice, Duke of Saxony, married Anne, daughter of Christian, King of Denmark. It was agreed upon, in the contract of marriage, that Duke Maurice should settle no estate of inheritance upon him out of the lands of Duke Frederick, but out of his own paternal inheritance.—*Sleidan*, book xxi. p. 474; *Muller's Annals of the House of Saxony*, p. 112, Weymar, 1701; *Week's Description of Dresden*, p. 350, Nürnberg, 1680.

Au mois d'Octobre 1548, le duc Auguste, frère de Maurice, Electeur de Saxe, épousa Anne, fille de Christiern Roi de Dannemarck. Il fut expressément stipulé dans le contrat de mariage, que la portion héréditaire d'Auguste ne seroit point assignée sur les biens confisqués de l'ancien Electeur Jean Frederic. Les fiançailles furent célébrées à Kolding dans le Zullandt, et les noces à Torgau en Misnie, le douzième d'Octobre. La Reine y assista avec la

noblesse Danoise qui l'avoit accompagnée. Georges, Princes d'Analt, Prévôt de Magdebourg, donna la bénédiction nuptiale aux époux.—*P. Barre, Charles Quint*, tome viii. partie 2, p. 800.

*Marriage of Maurice's brother, at Torgau, in October, 1548.*

In addition to dancing, music, feasting, tournaments and races, Maurice delighted his guests with splendid fire-works, which were let off upon the Elbe.

An immense wooden castle, with four square towers at the corners, and one in the middle, was erected on the Elbe, at a short distance from Torgau, on which thousands of fire-works were displayed. The defenders of the castle, representing Turks, were splendidly dressed in red by order of the Elector, and their opponents in white.—*Von Langenn*, part 2, p. 147.

#### *Coaches.*

Although journeys were generally performed on horseback, the art of building coaches must have been perfected about this time in Saxony, because a skilful coach-maker, named Bailel Hoffmann, was sent to Denmark, at the request of the King Christian, by Augustus, to build carriages there, and also the necessary iron, wood, and implements for the purpose.—*Von Langenn*, part 2, p. 158.

Trumpets were sounded to call the company to the banquets.

A banquet in those times consisted of hare, roast meat, apples in butter, roast birds and show-dishes, as a first course. Fish, roast turkey, tarts of quince and pears, and gilded hare pies, as a second course ; and cakes and sweet wine, curd milk and rice, and how dishes, as a third course.—*Week's Description of Dresden*, p. 347, Nürnberg, 1680.

The number of costly goblets and cups belonging to Maurice, was very considerable ; several were tokens of remembrance of ancient and of existing times. There were among them, gilt mortars and vipers' tongues, ewers, little cups of jasper, chrystral drinking cups, large silver bowls with goblets, gilt court cups, and virgin's cups ; but what was particularly celebrated, was a golden tankard and two golden drinking vessels, a present from His Imperial Majesty. Some of the principal pieces of plate bore particular names ; a large gilt cup was called “The Mainzer,” or cup of Mayence.—*Von Langenn*, part 2, p. 140.

The Electors and Princes sat at dinner together ; counsellors, nobles, and prelates, together ; inferior nobles together.

A hare cost threepence.

The princes and high nobles used to travel with

from sixty to one hundred and fifty servants in their retinue. In the tournaments, large arches were erected, covered with green branches, and round these arches were emblazoned, in letters of gold, six virtues, such as courage, generosity, &c. &c.—*Muller's Annals.*

## PAGE 264.

The Emperor himself, in the fullness of security, was so little moved by a memorial, in the name of the ecclesiastical electors, admonishing him to be on his guard against Maurice, that he made light of this intelligence; and his answer to them abounds with declarations of his entire and confident reliance on the fidelity as well as attachment to that prince.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. p. 69; *Sleidan*, book xxiii. p. 536.

Le premier de Mars, il tint à Torgau, une assemblée générale de ses Etats. Il y exposa le sujet de son différend avec les enfans du Landgrave, qui le sommoient, *disoit-il* de tenir la parole qu'il leur avoit donnée; il ajouta, qu'il ne pouvoit plus éluder leur juste demande, qu'il avoit donc résolu d'aller, les trouver suivant la promesse qu'il leur avoit faite: qu'il ordonnoit à ses sujets d'obeir pendant son absence à Auguste son frère, et qu'il vouloit qu'on levât incessamment des troupes pour garder les frontières du pais.—*P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 871; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre x. p. 217.

## PAGE 267.

At last Maurice's preparations were completed, and he had the satisfaction to find that his intrigues and designs were still unknown. But, although now ready to take the field, he did not lay aside the arts which he had hitherto employed, and by one piece of craft more, he deceived his enemies a few days longer. He gave out, that he was about to begin that journey to Inspruck, of which he had so often talked, and he took one of the ministers whom Granvelle had so often bribed to attend him thither. After travelling post a few stages, he pretended to be indisposed by the fatigue of the journey, and despatching the suspected minister to make his apology to the Emperor for this delay, and to assure him that he would be at Inspruck within a few days, he mounted on horseback as soon as this spy on his actions was gone, rode full speed towards Thuringia, joined his army, which amounted to twenty thousand foot and five thousand horse, and put it immediately in motion.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. p. 70.

These circumstances concerning the Saxon ministers, whom Granvelle had bribed, are not mentioned by the German historians; but I received this information from the Elector Palatine, and as they are perfectly agreeable to the rest of Maurice's conduct, they may be considered as authentic.—*Melville's Mem.* p. 13.

## PAGE 272.

De Donavert les confédérés marchèrent à Augsbourg, où l'Empereur avoit mis une garnison de quatre compagnies d'infanterie. L'arrivée des princes répandit l'allarme dans la ville. La garnison qui se méfioit des Bourgeois, demanda à se retirer, et peu après la ville se rendit. Dès que les confédérés s'en virent les maîtres, ils rétablirent l'ancien conseil que l'Empereur avoit aboli, et rendirent aux quartiers le droit de suffrage qu'il leur avoit ôté.—*Barre*, tome viii. p. 872 ; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre x. p 217 ; *Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. p. 73.

Maurice, Electeur de Saxe, ayant gagné par ses feintes le tems dont il avoit besoin pour assembler ses troupes et faire de nouvelles levées, publia un manifeste, dans lequel il declara : que plusieurs raisons l'avoient obligé, lui, le Prince Guillaume de Hesse fils du Landgrave, et le Duc de Mecklebourg, de s'allier avec le Roi de France : premierement pour le soutien de la religion, ensuite pour la liberté du Landgrave de Hesse, et de Jean Frederic de Saxe ; enfin pour l'intérêt de toute la nation.—*P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 869 ; *De Thou*, livre dix, p. 215 ; *Robertson*, vol. iv. p. 71.

## PAGE 273.

Maurice readily agreed to an interview with Ferdinand in the town of Lintz in Austria: and

having left his army to proceed on its march under the command of the Duke of Mecklenburg, he repaired thither.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. p. 75 ; *Barre*, tome viii. partie 2, 872 ; *Sleidan*, book xxiv. p. 556.

Le dernier jour d'Avril, les confédérés campèrent sur le Danube un peu au dessous d'Ulm.—Pendant que les princes restoient à Augsbourg, Maurice partit pour Lintz pour négocier un accommodement. Maurice proposa les conditions suivantes :

Qu'on mettroit le Landgrave en liberté ;—

Qu'on termineroit les différends touchant la religion :

Qu'on étableroit une autre forme dans le gouvernement.

Qu'on feroit la paix avec le Roi de France leur allié.

Qu'on accorderoit la grace aux proscrits, et surtout au Colonel Heideck, qui s'étoit mis sous la protection de Maurice le tens du siège de Magdebourg.—*De Barre*, tome viii. p. 872 ; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre x. p. 219.

#### PAGE 278.

Encouraged by this appearance of a pacific disposition, Ferdinand proposed a second interview at Passau on the twenty-sixth of May, and that a truce should commence on that day, and continue to the tenth of June, in order to give them leisure

for adjusting all the points in dispute.—*Robertson*, vol. iv. book x. page 76; *Sleidan*. book xxiv. p. 557; *Barre*, tome. viii. p. 873.

## PAGE 279.

Next day the Princes advanced with the foot, and having with them but two hundred horse, marched into Fiessen; and not far from La Rue, came to the narrow passes, possessed by about eight hundred Imperialists, with two field-pieces. Those they charged; and forcing their way into the straits, drove the enemy out, who flying to the camp near La Rue, put their comrades into great fear and consternation. The Princes following close in the pursuit, break in upon them also, and at length put them to flight; of whom about a thousand were taken, killed, or drowned in the Leck, with the loss of one pair of colours.—*Sleidan*, book xxii. p. 559; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre x. p. 220; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 874.

## PAGE 279.

Da questo lusinghevole canto addormentato l'Imperadore, era venuto ad Ispruck con poche soldatesche; quando Maurizio sul principio d'Aprile con poderoso esercizio arrivò ad Augusta, e durò poca fatica a conquistarla, ed indi speditamente s'incamminò alla volta d'Ispruck, sollicitato da 'suoi Uffiziali, che gli diceano, "che bella caccia sarebbe la nostra, se potessimo coglier ivi il Signor Carlo!". Al che dicono che rispondesse Maurizio: "Non ho

gabbia sì grande da mettervi un Augello sì grosso." *Muratori.*

## PAGE 280.

We told you before how Duke Maurice departed from Lintz, &c. Maurice returning to the camp, marched his associates towards the Alps, &c. At the instigation of the French ambassador, he resolved to fall on the Emperor's troops. May 17, he advanced almost as far as the town of Fiessen, lying at the entry of the Alps, upon the River Leck. He sent scouts to learn intelligence of the enemy. . . . . Wherefore the Princes sent some choice men, picked out of the whole, who having made an excursion near the enemy's camp, interrupted some stragglers, and brought them with them back to the army, the semade several discoveries.—*Sleidan*, book xxiv. p. 559; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 874; *De Thou*, tome ii. livre 10, p. 220.

## PAGE 293.

Elated with this success, which exceeded his most sanguine hopes, Maurice pressed forward to Ehrenberg, a castle situated on a high and steep precipice, which commanded the only pass through the mountains. As this fort had been surrendered to the Protestants at the beginning of the Smalkaldic war, because the garrison was then too weak to defend it: the Emperor, sensible of its

importance, had taken care at this juncture, to throw into it a body of troops sufficient to maintain it against the greatest army. But a shepherd, in pursuing a goat which had strayed from his flock, having discovered an unknown path, by which it was possible to ascend to the top of the rock, came with this seasonable piece of intelligence to Maurice. A small band of soldiers, under the command of George of Mecklenberg, was instantly ordered to follow this guide. They set out in the evening, and clambering up the rugged track with infinite fatigue as well as danger, they reached the summit unperceived at an hour which had been agreed upon. When Maurice began the assault on the one side of the castle, they appeared on the other, ready to scale the walls, which were feeble in that place, because it had been hitherto deemed inaccessible. The garrison, struck with terror at the sight of an enemy on a quarter where they had thought themselves perfectly secure, immediately threw down their arms.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book x. p. 78, 2nd edit.; *De Thou*, tome ii. p. 221; *P. Barre*, tome viii. p. 874, 4to.

## PAGE 296.

La déroute des Impériaux jeta dans Reute un si grand effroi qu'on ne put ranger en bataille les troupes qui s'y trouvoient, ni les disposer au combat.—Les Impériaux furent entièrement défaites :

ils perdirent un drapeau et mille hommes, sans qu'il coutât beaucoup aux confédérés. Les derniers, fiers de ce succès, poursuivirent leur victoire, et attaquèrent le château d'Eremberg. Ils prirent d'abord une redoute qui en defendoit l'approche, et ils s'emparèrent de tout le canon qui y étoit. Il ne restoit plus que le château, situé sur un rocher escarpé de toutes parts, et que les connoisseurs regardoient comme imprenable. . . . . Mais un berger qui montoit à travers les halliers, il la suivit, et après avoir bien remarqué ce sentier, il alla en donner avis aux confédérés. La garrison voyant l'ennemi parvenu avec audace jusqu'à ce lieu inaccessible, fut obligée de se rendre. De triezze compagnies qui étoient dans la fortresse, il n'y en eut que quatre qui s'échappèrent dans le feu de l'action ; les confédérés y perdirent peu de monde et firent trois mille prisonniers.

## PAGE 304.

But Duke Maurice fell into great danger after ; for resolving to march forward, the soldiers commanded by Rifeberg refused to move, unless they had some extraordinary pay in hand for taking the Castle ; but Duke Maurice told them, that it was an unreasonable demand, and at the same time commanded one of the mutineers, who bawled out louder than the rest, to be apprehended

with that, the rest made at him both with pikes and butt ends of musquets, so that flying in all haste, with much ado he saved his life.—*Sleidan*, book xxiv. p. 559 ; *De Thou*, tom. ii. livre x. p. 221 ; *De Barre*, tom. viii. p. 874.

Comme Maurice vouloit attaquer Inspruck, il envoya par le chemin des Alpes, qui étoit alors le plus libre, deux régimens vers cette place qui n'est qu'à deux journées delà ; il en laissa un autre à Fiessen avec toute la Cavalerie pour garder les passages—Le Lendemain, Maurice et ses alliés se joignirent a Ziert ; à deux lieues d'Inspruck, avec l'infanterie qu'il avoit envoyée devant—L'Empereur sortit, cette même nuit d'Inspruck, à la hâte et en désordre, et y laissa tous ses equipages—Comme il étoit incommodé, il se mit dans une litière, et fit ainsi la route, &c.

L'Electeur Maurice arriva à Inspruck la même nuit que l'Empereur en partit—après avoir poursuivi Charles pendant quelque tems. &c. &c.—*P. Barre*, tome 8ème, p. 875, 4to.

Philip of Hesse was received on his frontiers : sorrow had broken down his health and whitened his hair, although he was still in the middle age ; and to have seen him kneeling in the Church of Cassel by the tomb of his faithful consort, who had twice

prayed the Emperor for the liberation of her husband, who came back at last, but three years too late, to smooth her painful death-bed.—*Rose's Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, vol. xvi. 4to. 3d. edit. 1839.

At the very juncture when the Emperor had attained to almost unlimited despotism, Maurice, with power seemingly inadequate to such an undertaking, compelled him to relinquish all his usurpations, and established not only the religious, but civil liberties of Germany, on such foundations as have hitherto remained unshaken. Although at one period of his life, his conduct excited the jealousy of the Protestants, and at another, drew on him the resentment of the Roman Catholics, such was his masterly address, that he was the only Prince of the age, who, in any degree possessed the confidence of both, and whom both lamented as the most able, as well as faithful guardian of the Constitution and laws of his Country.—*Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. iv. book 11, p. 134.

The Emperor pardoned also Albert Count Mansfeldt and his sons.—*Sleidan*, book xxiv. p. 575.

*Maurice's Justification.*

Afterwards, on the 1st of August, the Emperor sent to Duke Maurice from Ratisbonne a copy of

the proscription we mentioned before, and in his letters to him and the people, relates the same things almost that were contained in the ban and instrument of proscription ; and because he was related in blood and affinity to the parties outlawed, so that he might claim some right and title to their estates and goods, he strictly charges him to assist him with all his power in seizing and taking possession of their provinces ; nay, that for preservation of his own right, he should with all diligence put himself in possession of all ; else the first possessor, whoever that might be, should have all without any regard had to his consanguinity and the rights of entail ; that besides, if he slighted the Emperor's commands, he should incur the same pains that they had done. He charges all the nobility, gentry, and commons, upon the same penalty, to obey his proclamation, and faithfully assist the prince. These letters were equally directed to Duke Maurice and his brother Augustus.—*Sleidan*, book xvii, p. 391 ; *P. Barre*, tome 8ème, partie 2nde. p. 665.

THE END.









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